

CARMEN SÆCULARE.  
AN ODE  
IN HONOUR OF  
THE JUBILEE OF QUEEN VICTORIA.

I.

FIFTY times the rose has flower'd and faded,  
Fifty times the golden harvest fallen,  
Since our Queen assumed the globe, the sceptre.

II.

She beloved for a kindness  
Rare in Fable or History,  
Queen, and Empress of India,  
Crown'd so long with a diadem  
Never worn by a worthier,  
Now with prosperous auguries  
Comes at last to the bounteous  
Crowning year of her Jubilee.

## III.

Nothing of the lawless, of the Despot,  
Nothing of the vulgar, or vainglorious,  
All is gracious, gentle, great and Queenly.

## IV.

You then loyally, all of you,  
Deck your houses, illuminate  
All your towns for a festival,  
And in each let a multitude  
Loyal, each, to the heart of it,  
One full voice of allegiance,  
Hail the great Ceremonial  
Of this year of her Jubilee.

## V.

Queen, as true to womanhood as Queenhood,  
Glorying in the glories of her people,  
Sorrowing with the sorrows of the lowest!

## VI.

You, that wanton in affluence,  
Spare not now to be bountiful,  
Call your poor to regale with you,  
Make their neighbourhood healthfuller,  
Give your gold to the Hospital,  
Let the weary be comforted,  
Let the needy be banqueted,  
Let the maim'd in his heart rejoice  
At this year of her Jubilee.

## VII.

Henry's fifty years are all in shadow,  
Gray with distance Edward's fifty summers,  
Ev'n her Grandsire's fifty half forgotten.

## VIII.

You, the Patriot Architect,  
Shape a stately memorial,  
Make it regally gorgeous,  
Some Imperial Institute,  
Rich in symbol, in ornament,  
Which may speak to the centuries,  
All the centuries after us,  
Of this year of her Jubilee.



IX.

Fifty years of ever-broadening Commerce !

Fifty years of ever-brightening Science !

Fifty years of ever-widening Empire !

X.

You, the Mighty, the Fortunate,

You, the Lord-territorial,

You, the Lord-manufacturer,

You, the hardy, laborious,

Patient children of Albion,

You, Canadian, Indian,

Australasian, African,

All your hearts be in harmony,

All your voices in unison,

Singing "Hail to the glorious

Golden year of her Jubilee !"

## XI.

Are there thunders moaning in the distance?  
Are there spectres moving in the darkness?  
Trust the Lord of Light to guide her people,  
Till the thunders pass, the spectres vanish,  
And the Light is Victor, and the darkness  
Dawns into the Jubilee of the Ages.

TENNYSON.

## THE WOODLANDERS.

BY THOMAS HARDY.

## CHAPTER XLIV.

FITZPIERS had hardly been gone an hour when Grace began to sicken. The next day she kept her room. Old Jones was called in: he murmured some statements in which the words "feverish symptoms" occurred. Grace heard them, and guessed the means by which she had brought this visitation upon herself.

One day while she still lay there with her head throbbing, wondering if she were really going to join him who had gone before, Grammer Oliver came to her bedside. "I don't know wher this is meant for you to take, ma'am," she said. "But I have found it on the table. It was left by Marty, I think, when she came this morning."

Grace turned her hot eyes upon what Grammer held up. It was the phial left at the hut by her husband when he had begged her to take some drops of its contents, if she wished to preserve herself from falling a victim to the malady which had pulled down Winterborne. She examined it as well as she could. The liquid was of an opaline hue, and bore a label with an inscription in Italian. He had probably got it in his wanderings abroad. She knew but little Italian, but could understand that the cordial was a febrifuge of some sort. Her father, her mother, and all the household were anxious for her recovery, and she resolved to obey her

husband's directions. Whatever the risk, if any, she was prepared to run it. A glass of water was brought, and the drops dropped in. The effect, though not miraculous, was remarkable. In less than an hour she felt calmer, cooler, better able to reflect, less inclined to fret and chafe and wear herself away. She took a few drops more. From that time the fever retreated, and went out like a damped conflagration.

"How clever he is!" she said regretfully. "Why could he not have had more principle, so as to turn his great talents to good account! Perhaps he has saved my useless life. But he doesn't know it, and doesn't care whether he has saved it or not; and on that account will never be told by me! Probably he only gave it to me in the arrogance of his skill, to show the greatness of his resources beside mine, as Elijah drew down fire from Heaven."

As soon as she had quite recovered from this foiled attack upon her life, Grace went to Marty South's cottage. The current of her being had again set towards the lost Giles Winterborne.

"Marty," she said, "we both loved him. We will go to his grave together."

Great Hintock church stood at the upper part of the village, and could be reached without passing through the street. In the dusk of the late Sep-

tember day they went thither by secret ways, walking mostly in silence side by side, each busied with her own thoughts. Grace had a trouble exceeding Marty's, that haunting sense of having put out the light of his life by her own hasty doings. She had tried to persuade herself that he might have died of his illness, even if she had not taken possession of his house. Sometimes she succeeded in her attempt : sometimes she did not.

They stood by the grave together, and though the sun had gone down they could see over the woodland for miles, and down to the vale in which he had been accustomed to descend every year with his portable mill and press to make cider about this time.

Perhaps Grace's first grief, the discovery that if he had lived he could never have claimed her, had some power in softening this, the second. On Marty's part there was the same consideration : never would she have been his. As no anticipation of gratified affection had been in existence while he was with them, there was none to be disappointed now that he had gone.

Grace was abased when, by degrees, she found that she had never understood Giles as Marty had done. Marty South, alone of all the women in Hintock and the world, had approximated to Winterborne's level of intelligent intercourse with Nature. In that respect she had formed his true complement in the other sex, had lived as his counterpart, had subjoined her thought to his as a corollary. The casual glimpses which the ordinary population bestowed upon that wondrous world of sap and leaves called the Hintock woods had been with these two, Giles and Marty, a clear gaze. They had been possessed of its finer mysteries as of commonplace knowledge and had been able to read its hieroglyphs as ordinary writing. To them the sights and sounds of night, winter, wind, storm, amid those dense boughs which had to Grace a touch of the uncanny and even of the super-

natural, were simple occurrences whose origin, continuance, and laws they knew. They had planted together, and together they had felled : together they had with the run of the years mentally collected those remoter signs and symbols which seen in few were of runic obscurity, but all together made an alphabet. From the light lashing of the twigs upon their faces when brushing through them in the dark, they could pronounce upon the species of the tree whence they stretched : from the quality of the wind's murmur through a bough they could in like manner name its sort afar off. They knew by a glance at a trunk if its heart were sound, or tainted with incipient decay ; and by the state of its upper twigs the stratum that had been reached by its roots. The artifices of the seasons were seen by them from the conjuror's own point of view, and not from that of the spectator.

"He ought to have married you, Marty, and nobody else in the world !" said Grace with conviction, after thinking somewhat in the above strain.

Marty shook her head. "In all our outdoor days and years together, ma'am," she replied, "the one thing he never spoke of to me was love ; nor I to him."

"Yet you and he could speak in a tongue that nobody else knew—not even my father, though he came nearest knowing—the tongue of the trees and fruits and flowers themselves."

She could indulge in mournful fancies like this to Marty ; but the hard core to her grief, which Marty's had not, remained. Had she been sure that Giles's death resulted entirely from his exposure, it would have driven her well nigh to insanity ; but there was always that bare possibility that his exposure had only precipitated what was inevitable. She longed to believe that it had not done even this. There was only one man whose opinion on the circumstances she would be at all disposed to trust. Her husband was that man. Yet to ask him

it would be necessary to detail the true conditions in which she and Winterborne had lived during those three or four critical days that followed her flight; and in withdrawing her original defiant announcement on that point there seemed a weakness she did not care to show. She never doubted that Fitzpiers would believe her if she made a clean confession of the actual situation; but to volunteer the correction would seem like signalling for a truce, and that in her present frame of mind was what she did not feel the need of.

It will probably not appear a surprising statement, after what has been already declared of Fitzpiers, that the man whom Grace's fidelity could not keep faithful was stung into passionate throbs of interest concerning her by her avowal of the contrary. He declared to himself that he had never known her dangerously full compass if she were capable of such a reprisal; and, melancholy as it may be to admit the fact, his own humiliation and regret engendered a smouldering admiration of her.

He passed a month or two of great misery at Exbury, the place to which he had retired—quite as much misery indeed as Grace, could she have known of it, would have been inclined to inflict upon any living creature, how much soever he might have wronged her. Then a sudden hope dawned upon him: he wondered if her affirmation were true. He asked himself whether it were not the act of an innocent woman whose pique had for the moment blinded her to the contingencies of such an announcement. His wide experience of the sex had taught him that, in many cases, women who ventured on hazardous matters did so because they lacked an imagination gross enough to feel their full force. In this light Grace's bold avowal might merely have denoted the desperation of one who was a child to the realities of obliquity.

Fitzpiers's mental sufferings and suspense led him at last to take a

melancholy journey to the neighbourhood of Little Hintock; and here he hovered for hours around the scene of the purest emotional experiences that he had ever known in his life. He walked about the woods that surrounded Melbury's house, keeping out of sight like a criminal. It was a fine evening, and on his way homeward he passed near Marty South's cottage. As usual she had lighted her candle without closing her shutters; he saw her within as he had seen her many times before.

She was polishing tools, and though he had not wished to show himself he could not resist speaking to her through the half-open door. "What are you doing that for, Marty?"

"Because I want to clean them. They are not mine." He could see indeed that they were not hers, for one was a spade, large and heavy, and another was a bill-hook which she could only have used with both hands. The spade, though not a new one, had been so completely burnished that it was bright as silver.

Fitzpiers somehow divined that they were Giles Winterborne's, and he put the question to her.

She replied in the affirmative. "I am going to keep 'em," she said, "but I can't get his apple-mill and press. I wish I could: it is going to be sold, they say."

"Then I will buy it for you," said Fitzpiers. "That will be making you a return for a kindness you did me." His glance fell upon the girl's rare-coloured hair, which had grown again. "Oh, Marty, those locks of yours—and that letter! . . . But it was a kindness to send it, nevertheless," he added musingly.

After this there was confidence between them—such confidence as there had never been before. Marty was shy, indeed, of speaking about the letter, and her motives in writing it; but she thanked him warmly for his promise of the cider-press. She would travel with it in the autumn season as he had done, she said. She

would be quite strong enough, with old Creedle as an assistant.

"Ah!—there was one nearer to him than you," said Fitzpiers, referring to Grace. "One who lived where he lived, and was with him when he died."

Then Marty, suspecting that he did not know the true circumstances, from the fact that Mrs. Fitzpiers and himself were living apart, told him of Giles's generosity to Grace in giving up his house to her at the risk, and possibly the sacrifice, of his own life. When the surgeon heard it he almost envied Giles his chivalrous character. He expressed a wish to Marty that his visit to her should be kept secret, and went home thoughtful, feeling that in more than one sense his journey to Hintock had not been in vain.

He would have given much to win Grace's forgiveness then. But whatever he dared hope for in that kind from the future, there was nothing to be done yet, while Giles Winterborne's memory was green. To wait was imperative. A little time might melt her frozen thoughts, and lead her to look on him with toleration, if not with love.

#### CHAPTER XLV.

WEEKS and months of mourning for Winterborne had been passed by Grace in the soothing monotony of the memorial act to which she and Marty had devoted themselves. Twice a week the pair went in the dusk to Great Hintock, and, like the two mourners in *Cymbeline* sweetened his sad grave with their flowers and their tears. Nothing ever had brought home to her with such force as this death how little acquirements and culture weigh beside sterling personal character. While her simple sorrow for his loss took a softer edge with the lapse of the autumn and winter seasons, her self-reproach at having had a possible hand in causing it knew slight abatement.

Little occurred at Hintock during these months of the fall and decay of the leaf. Discussion of the almost contemporaneous death of Mrs. Charmond abroad had waxed and waned. Her body was not brought home. It seemed to accord well with the fitful fever of that impassioned woman's life that she should not have found a native grave. She had enjoyed but a life-interest in the estate, which, after her death, passed to a relative of her husband's—one who knew not Felice, one whose purpose seemed to be to blot out every vestige of her.

On a certain day in February—the cheerful day of St. Valentine—a letter reached Mrs. Fitzpiers, which had been mentally promised her for that particular day a long time before.

Her husband announced that he was living at some midland town, where he had obtained a temporary practice as assistant to a local medical man, whose curative principles were all wrong, though he dared not set them right. He had thought fit to communicate with her on that day of tender traditions to inquire if, in the event of his obtaining a substantial practice that he had in view elsewhere, she could forget the past and bring herself to join him. There the practical part ended: he then went on:

"My last year of experience has added ten years to my age, dear Grace and dearest wife that ever erring man undervalued. You may be absolutely indifferent to what I say, but let me say it: I have never loved any woman alive or dead as I love, respect, and honour you at this present moment. What you told me in the pride and naughtiness of your heart I never believed [this, by the way, was not strictly true]; but even if I had believed it, it could never have estranged me from you. Is there any use in telling you—no, there is not—that I dream of your ripe lips more frequently than I say my prayers: that the old familiar rustle of your dress often returns upon my mind till it distracts me? If you could condescend even only to see me again you would be breathing life into a corpse. My pure, pure Grace, modest as a turtle-dove, how came I ever to possess you? For the sake of being present in your mind on this lovers'

day, I think I would almost rather have you hate me a little than not think of me at all. You may call my fancies whimsical ; but remember, sweet, lost one, that 'nature is fine in love, and where 'tis fine it sends some instance of itself.'—I will not intrude upon you further now. Make me a little bit happy by sending back one line to say that you will consent, at any rate, to a short interview. I will meet you and leave you as a mere acquaintance, if you will only afford me this slight means of making a few explanations, and of putting my position before you. Believe me, in spite of all you may do or feel,

"Your lover always (once your husband),

"E. F."

It was, oddly enough, the first occasion, or nearly the first, on which Grace had ever received a love-letter from him, his courtship having taken place under conditions which rendered letter-writing unnecessary. Its perusal, therefore, had a certain novelty for her. She thought that, upon the whole, he wrote love-letters very well. But the chief rational interest of the letter to the reflective Grace lay in the chance that such a meeting as he proposed would afford of setting her doubts at rest one way or the other on her actual share in Winterborne's death. The relief of consulting a skilled mind, the one professional man who had seen Giles at that time, would be immense. As for that statement that she had uttered in her disdainful grief, which at the time she had regarded as her triumph, she was quite prepared to admit to him that his belief was the true one ; for in wronging herself as she did when she made it she had done what to her was a far more serious thing, wronged Winterborne's memory.

Without consulting her father, or any one in the house or out of it, Grace replied to the letter. She agreed to meet Fitzpiers on two conditions ; of which the first was that the place of meeting should be the top of Rubdown Hill, the second that he would not object to Marty South accompanying her.

Whatever art, much or little, there may have been in Fitzpiers's so-called valentine to his wife, he felt a delight

as of the bursting of spring when her brief reply came. It was one of the few pleasures that he had experienced of late years at all resembling those of his early youth. He promptly replied that he accepted the conditions, and named the day and hour at which he would be on the spot she mentioned.

A few minutes before three on the appointed day found him climbing the well-known hill, which had been the axis of so many critical movements in their lives during his residence at Hintock. The sight of each homely and well-remembered object swelled the regret that seldom left him now. Whatever paths might lie open to his future, the soothing shades of Hintock were forbidden him for ever as a permanent dwelling-place. He longed for the society of Grace. But to lay offerings on her slighted altar was his first aim, and until her propitiation was complete he would constrain her in no way to return to him. The least reparation that he could make, in a case where he would gladly have made much, would be to let her feel herself absolutely free to choose between living with him and without him. Moreover, a subtilist in emotions, he cultivated, as under glasses, strange and mournful pleasures that he would not willingly let die just at present. To show any forwardness in suggesting a *modus vivendi* to Grace would be to put an end to these exotics. To be the vassal of her sweet will for a time—he demanded no more, and found solace in the contemplation of the soft miseries she caused him.

Approaching the hill-top with a mind strung to these notions, Fitzpiers discerned a gay procession of people coming over the crest, and was not long in perceiving it to be a wedding-party. Though the wind was keen the women were in light attire, and the flowered waistcoats of the men had a pleasing vividness of pattern. Each of the gentler ones clung to the arm of her partner so tightly as to have with him one step, rise, swing, gait, almost one centre of gravity. In



the buxom bride Fitzpiers recognised no other than Suke Damson, who in her light gown looked a giantess: the small husband beside her he saw to be Tim Tangs.

Fitzpiers could not escape, for they had seen him; though of all the beauties of the world whom he did not wish to meet Suke was the chief. But he put the best face on the matter that he could, and came on, the approaching company evidently discussing him and his separation from Mrs. Fitzpiers. As the couples closed upon him he expressed his congratulations.

"We be just walking round the parishes to show ourselves a bit," said Tim. "First we het across to Delborough, then athwart to here, and from here we go to Rubdown and Mill-shot, and then round by the cross roads home. Home says I, but it won't be that long! We be off next month."

"Indeed. Where to?"

Tim informed him that they were going to New Zealand. Not but that he would have been contented with Hintock, but his wife was ambitious and wanted to leave: so he had given way.

"Then good-bye," said Fitzpiers; "I may not see you again." He shook hands with Tim and turned to the bride. "Good-bye, Suke," he said, taking her hand also. "I wish you and your husband prosperity in the country you have chosen." With this he left them, and hastened on to his appointment.

The wedding-party re-formed and resumed march likewise. But in restoring his arm to Suke, Tim noticed that her full and blooming countenance had undergone a change. "Hullo! me dear—what's the matter?" said Tim.

"Nothing to speak o'," said she. But to give the lie to her assertion she was seized with lachrymose twitches, that soon produced a dribbling face.

"How — what the devil's this about!" exclaimed the bridegroom.

"She's a little wee bit overcome, poor dear!" said the first bridesmaid,

unfolding her handkerchief and wiping Suke's eyes.

"I never did like parting from people!" said Suke as soon as she could speak.

"Why him in particular?"

"Well—he's such a clever doctor, that 'tis a thousand pities we sha'n't see him any more! There'll be no such clever doctor as he in New Zealand, if I should require one; and the thought o't got the better of my feelings!"

They walked on, but Tim's face had grown rigid and pale, for he recalled slight circumstances disregarded at the time of their occurrence. The former boisterous laughter of the wedding-party at the groomsmen's jokes was heard ringing through the woods no more.

By this time Fitzpiers had advanced on his way to the top of the hill, where he saw two figures emerging from the bank on the right hand. These were the expected ones, Grace and Marty South, who had evidently come there by a short and secret path through the wood. Grace was muffled up in her winter dress, and he thought that she had never looked so seductive as at this moment, in the noontide bright but heatless sun, and the keen wind, and the purplish-grey masses of brushwood around. Fitzpiers continued to regard the nearing picture, till at length their glances met for a moment, when she demurely sent off hers at a tangent and gave him the benefit of her three-quarter face, while with courteous completeness of conduct he lifted his hat in a large arc. Marty dropped behind; and when Fitzpiers held out his hand Grace touched it with her fingers.

"I have agreed to be here mostly because I wanted to ask you something important," said Mrs. Fitzpiers, her intonation modulating in a direction that she had not quite wished it to take.

"I am most attentive," said her husband. "Shall we take to the wood for privacy?"



Grace demurred, and Fitzpiers gave in, and they kept the public road.

At any rate, she would take his arm? This also was gravely negatived, the refusal being audible to Marty.

"Why not?" he inquired.

"Oh, Mr. Fitzpiers—how can you ask!"

"Right, right," said he, his effusiveness shrivelled up.

As they walked on she returned to her inquiry. "It is about a matter that may perhaps be unpleasant to you. But I think I need not consider that too carefully."

"Not at all," said Fitzpiers, heroically.

She then took him back to the time of poor Winterborne's death, and related the precise circumstances amid which his fatal illness had come upon him, particularising the dampness of the shelter to which he had betaken himself, his concealment from her of the hardships that he was undergoing, all that he had put up with, all that he had done for her in his scrupulous considerateness. The retrospect brought her to tears as she asked him if he thought that the sin of having driven him to his death was upon her.

Fitzpiers could hardly help showing his satisfaction at what her narrative indirectly revealed, the actual harmlessness of an escapade with her lover, which had at first, by her own showing, looked so grave; and he did not care to inquire whether that harmlessness had been the result of aim or of accident. With regard to her question, he declared that in his judgment no human being could answer it. He thought that upon the whole the balance of probabilities turned in her favour. Winterborne's apparent strength, during the last months of his life, must have been delusive. It had often occurred that after a first attack of that insidious disease a person's apparent recovery was a physiological mendacity.

The relief which came to Grace lay almost as much in sharing her knowledge of the particulars with an in-

telligent mind as in the assurances Fitzpiers gave her. "Well, then, to put this case before you, and obtain your professional opinion, was chiefly why I consented to come here to-day," said she, when he had reached the aforesaid conclusion.

"For no other reason at all?" he asked ruefully.

"It was nearly the whole."

They stood and looked over a gate at twenty or thirty starlings feeding in the grass, and he started the talk again by saying in a low voice, "And yet I love you more than ever I loved you in my life."

Grace did not move her eyes from the birds, and folded her delicate lips as if to keep them in subjection.

"It is a different kind of love altogether," said he. "Less passionate, more profound. It has nothing to do with the material conditions of the object at all: much to do with her character and goodness, as revealed by closer observation. 'Love talks with better knowledge, and knowledge with dearer love.'"

"That's out of *Measure for Measure*," said she slyly.

"Oh yes—I meant it as a citation," blandly replied Fitzpiers. "Well then, why not give me a very little bit of your heart again?"

The crash of a felled tree in the remote depths of the wood recalled the past at that moment, and all the homely faithfulness of Winterborne. "Don't ask it! My heart is in the grave with Giles," she replied staunchly.

"Mine is with you—in no less deep a grave I fear, according to that."

"I am very sorry; but it cannot be helped."

"How can you be sorry for me, when you wilfully keep open the grave?"

"Oh no—that's not so," returned Grace quickly; and moved to go away from him.

"But, dearest Grace!" said he. "You have condescended to come; and I thought from it that perhaps when I had passed through a long

state of probation you would be generous. But if there can be no hope of our getting completely reconciled, treat me gently—wretch though I am.”

“I did not say you were a wretch, nor have I ever said so.”

“But you have such a contemptuous way of looking at me that I fear you think so.”

Grace’s heart struggled between the wish not to be harsh and the fear that she might mislead him. “I cannot look contemptuous unless I feel contempt,” she said evasively. “And all I feel is lovelessness.”

“I have been very bad I know,” he returned. “But unless you can really love me again, Grace, I would rather go away from you for ever. I don’t want you to receive me again for duty’s sake, or anything of that sort. If I had not cared more for your affection and forgiveness than my own personal comfort I should never have come back here. I could have obtained a practice at a distance, and have lived my own life without coldness or reproach. But I have chosen to return to the one spot on earth where my name is tarnished—to enter the house of a man from whom I have had worse treatment than from any other man alive—all for you!”

This was undeniably true, and it had its weight with Grace, who began to look as if she thought she had been shockingly severe.

“Before you go,” he continued, “I want to know your pleasure about me: what you wish me to do, or not to do.”

“You are independent of me, and it seems a mockery to ask that. Far be it from me to advise. But I will think it over. I rather need advice myself than stand in a position to give it.”

“You don’t need advice, wisest, dearest woman that ever lived. If you did . . .”

“Would you give it to me?”

“Would you act upon what I gave?”

“That’s not a fair inquiry,” said she smiling despite her gravity. “I

don’t mind hearing it—what you do really think the most correct and proper course for me.”

“It is so easy for me to say, and yet I dare not, for it would be provoking you to remonstrances.”

Knowing of course what the advice would be she did not press him further, and was about to beckon Marty forward and leave him, when he interrupted her with, “Oh! one moment, dear Grace—you will meet me again?”

She eventually agreed to see him that day fortnight. Fitzpiers expostulated at the interval, but the half-alarmed earnestness with which she intreated him not to come sooner made him say hastily that he submitted to her will—that he would regard her as a friend only, anxious for his reform and well-being, till such time as she might allow him to exceed that privilege.

All this was to assure her: it was only too clear that he had not won her confidence yet. It amazed Fitzpiers, and overthrew all his deductions from previous experience, to find that this girl, though she had been married to him, could yet be so coy. Notwithstanding a certain fascination that it carried with it, his reflections were sombre as he went homeward: he saw how deep had been his offence to produce so great a wariness in a gentle and once unsuspecting soul. He was himself too fastidious to care to coerce her. To be an object of misgiving or dislike to a woman who shared his home was what he could not endure the thought of. Life as it stood was more tolerable.

When he was gone, Marty joined Mrs. Fitzpiers. She would fain have consulted Marty on the question of Platonic relations with her former husband, as she preferred to regard him. But Marty showed no great interest in their affairs, so Grace said nothing. They came onward, and saw Melbury standing at the scene of the felling which had been audible to them, when, telling Marty that she wished her meeting with Mr. Fitzpiers to be kept private, she left the girl to join

her father. At any rate, she would consult him on the expediency of occasionally seeing her husband.

Her father was cheerful, and walked by her side as he had done in earlier days. "I was thinking of you when you came up," he said. "I have considered that what has happened is for the best. Since your husband is gone away, and seems not to wish to trouble you, why, let him go, and drop out of your life. Many women are worse off. You can live here comfortably enough, and he can emigrate, or do what he likes for his good. I wouldn't mind sending him the further sum of money he might naturally expect to come to him, so that you may not be bothered with him any more. He could hardly have gone on living here without speaking to me, or meeting me; and that would have been very unpleasant on both sides."

These remarks checked her intention. There was a sense of weakness in following them by saying that she had just met her husband by appointment. "Then you would advise me not to communicate with him?" she observed.

"I shall never advise ye again. You are your own mistress—do as you like. But my opinion is that if you don't live with him, you had better live without him, and not go shilly-shallying and playing bo-peep. You sent him away; and now he's gone. Very well: trouble him no more."

Grace felt a guiltiness—she hardly knew why—and made no confession.

#### CHAPTER XLVI.

THE woods were uninteresting, and Grace stayed indoors a great deal. She became quite a student, reading more than she had done since her marriage. But her seclusion was always broken for the periodical visit to Winterborne's grave with Marty, which was kept up with pious strictness for the purpose of putting snowdrops, primroses, and other vernal flowers thereon as they came.

One afternoon at sunset she was standing just outside her father's garden, which, like the rest of the Hintock inclosures, abutted into the wood. A slight footpath led along here, forming a secret way to either of the houses by getting through its boundary hedge. Grace was just about to adopt this mode of entry when a figure approached along the path, and held up his hand to detain her. It was her husband.

"I am delighted," he said, coming up out of breath; and there seemed no reason to doubt his words. "I saw you some way off—I was afraid you would go in before I could reach you."

"It is a week before the time," said she reproachfully. "I said a fortnight from the last meeting."

"My dear, you don't suppose I could wait a fortnight without trying to get a glimpse of you, even though you had declined to meet me! Would it make you angry to know that I have been along this path at dusk three or four times since our last meeting? Well, how are you?"

She did not refuse her hand, but when he showed a wish to retain it a moment longer than mere formality required, she made it smaller, so that it slipped away from him, with again that same alarmed look which always followed his attempts in this direction. He saw that she was not yet out of the elusive mood, not yet to be treated presumingly; and he was correspondingly careful to tranquillise her.

His assertion had seemed to impress her somewhat. "I had no idea you came so often," she said. "How far do you come from?"

"From Exbury. I always walk from Sheraton-Abbas, for if I hire people will know that I come; and my success with you so far has not been great enough to justify such overttness. Now, my dear one—as I *must* call you—I put it to you: will you see me a little oftener as the spring advances?"

Grace lapsed into unwonted sedate-

ness, and avoiding the question, said: "I wish you would concentrate on your profession, and give up those strange studies that used to distract you so much. I am sure you would get on."

"It is the very thing I am doing. I was going to ask you to burn—or, at least, get rid of—all my philosophical literature. It is in the bookcases in your rooms. The fact is, I never cared much for abstruse studies."

"I am so glad to hear you say that. And those other books—those piles of old plays—what good are they to a medical man?"

"None whatever!" he replied cheerfully. "Sell them at Sherton for what they will fetch."

"And those dreadful old French romances with their horrid spellings of 'filz' and 'ung' and 'ilz' and 'mary' and 'ma foy'?"

"You haven't been reading them, Grace?"

"Oh, no—I just looked into them, that was all."

"Make a bonfire of 'em directly you get home. I meant to do it myself. I can't think what possessed me ever to collect them. I have only a few professional hand-books now, and am quite a practical man. I am in hopes of having some good news to tell you soon, and then do you think you could—come to me again?"

"I would rather you did not press me on that just now," she replied with some feeling. "You have said you mean to lead a new, useful, effectual life; but I should like to see you put it in practice for a little while before you address that query to me. Besides—I could not live with you."

"Why not?"

Grace was silent a few instants. "I go with Marty to Giles's grave. We swore we would show him that devotion. And I mean to keep it up."

"Well, I wouldn't mind that at all. I have no right to expect anything else, and I will not wish you to keep away. I liked the man as well as any

I ever knew. In short, I would accompany you part of the way to the place, and smoke a cigar on the stile while I waited till you came back."

"Then you haven't given up smoking?"

"Well—ahem—no. I have thought of doing so, but"—

His extreme complaisance had rather disconcerted Grace, and the question about smoking had been to effect a diversion. Presently she said firmly, and with a moisture in her eye that he could not see, as her mind returned to poor Giles's "frustrate ghost;" "I don't like you—to speak lightly on that subject, if you did speak lightly. To be frank with you—quite frank—I think of him as my betrothed lover still. I cannot help it. So that it would be wrong for me to join you."

Fitzpiers was now uneasy. "You say your betrothed lover still," he rejoined. "When, then, were you betrothed to him, or engaged, as we common people say?"

"When you were away."

"How could that be?"

Grace would have avoided this, but her natural candour led her on. "It was when I was under the impression that my marriage with you was about to be annulled, and that he could then marry me. So I encouraged him to love me."

Fitzpiers winced visibly at this; and yet, upon the whole, she was right in telling it. Indeed, his perception that she was right in her absolute sincerity kept up his affectionate admiration for her under the pain of the rebuff. Time had been when the avowal that Grace had deliberately taken steps to replace him would have brought him no sorrow. But she so far dominated him now that he could not bear to hear her words, although the object of her high regard was no more.

"It is rough upon me—that!" he said bitterly. "Oh, Grace—I did not know you—tried to get rid of me! I suppose it is of no use, but I ask, cannot you hope to—find a little love in your heart for me again?"

"If I could I would oblige you; but

"I fear I cannot!" she replied, with illogical ruefulness. "And I don't see why you should mind my having had one lover besides yourself in my life, when you have had so many."

"But I can tell you honestly that I love you better than all of them put together, and that's what you will not tell me!"

"I am sorry; but I fear I cannot," she said sighing again.

"I wonder if you ever will?" He looked musingly into her indistinct face as if he would read the future there. "Now have pity, and tell me: will you try?"

"To love you again?"

"Yes; if you can."

"I don't know how to reply," she answered, her embarrassment proving her truth. "Will you promise to leave me quite free as to seeing you or not seeing you?"

"Certainly. Have I given any ground for you to doubt my first promise in that respect?"

She was obliged to admit that he had not.

"Then I think you might get your heart out of that grave," said he, with playful sadness. "It has been there a long time."

She faintly shook her head, but said: "I'll try to think of you more—if I can."

With this, Fitzpiers was compelled to be satisfied, and he asked her when she would meet him again.

"As we arranged—in a fortnight."

"If it must be a fortnight, it must!"

"This time, at least. I'll consider by the day I see you again if I can shorten the interval."

"Well, be that as it may, I shall come at least twice a week to look at your window."

"You must do as you like about that. Good-night."

"Say husband."

She seemed almost inclined to give him the word; but exclaiming, "No, no; I cannot," slipped through the garden-hedge and disappeared.

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Fitzpiers did not exaggerate when he told her that he should haunt the precincts of the dwelling. But his persistence in this course did not result in his seeing her much oftener than at the fortnightly interval which she had herself marked out as proper. At these times, however, she punctually appeared; and, as the spring wore on, the meetings were kept up, though their character changed but little with the increase in their number.

The small garden of the cottage occupied by the Tangs family (father, son, and now son's wife) aligned with the larger one of the timber-dealer at its upper end; and when young Tim, after leaving work at Melbury's, stood at dusk in the little bower at the corner of his inclosure to smoke a pipe, he frequently observed the surgeon pass along the outside track before-mentioned. Fitzpiers always walked loiteringly, pensively, looking with a sharp eye into the gardens one after another as he proceeded; for he did not wish to leave the now absorbing spot too quickly, after travelling so far to reach it: hoping always for a glimpse of her whom he passionately desired to take to his arms anew.

Now Tim began to be struck with these loitering progresses along the garden's boundaries in the gloaming, and wondered what they boded. It was, naturally, quite out of his power to divine the singular, sentimental revival in Fitzpiers's heart: the fineness of tissue which could take a deep, emotional, almost also an artistic pleasure in being the yearning lover of a woman he once had deserted, would have seemed an absurdity to the young sawyer. Mr. and Mrs. Fitzpiers were separated; therefore the question of affection as between them was settled. But his Suke had, since that meeting on their marriage-day, repentantly admitted, to the urgency of his questioning, a good deal concerning her past levities. Putting all things together, he could hardly avoid connecting Fitzpiers's

mysterious visits to this spot with Suke's residence under his roof. But he made himself fairly easy: the vessel in which they were about to emigrate sailed that month; and then Suke would be out of Fitzpiers's way for ever.

The interval at last expired, and the eve of their departure arrived. They were pausing in the room of the cottage allotted to them by Tim's father, after a busy day of preparation which had left them weary. In a corner stood their boxes, crammed and corded, their large case for the hold having already been sent away. The firelight shone upon Suke's fine face and form as she stood looking into it, and upon the face of Tim seated in a corner, and upon the walls of his father's house, which he was beholding that night almost for the last time. Tim Tangs was not happy. This scheme of emigration was dividing him from his father, for old Tangs would on no account leave Hintock; and had it not been for Suke's reputation and his own dignity Tim would at the last moment have abandoned the project. As he sat in the back part of the room he regarded her moodily, and the fire, and the boxes. One thing he had particularly noticed this evening—she was very restless: fitful in her actions, unable to remain seated, and in a marked degree depressed.

"Sorry that you be going, after all, Suke!" he said.

She sighed involuntarily. "I don't know but that I be," she answered. "'Tis natural, isn't it, when one is going away?"

"But you wasn't born here as I was."

"No."

"There's folk left behind that you'd fain have with 'ee, I reckon?"

"Why do you think that?"

"I've seen things, and I've heard things; and Suke, I say 'twill be a good move for me to get 'ee away. I don't mind his leavings abroad, but I do mind 'em at home."

Suke's face was not changed from its aspect of listless indifference by the words. She answered nothing; and shortly after he went out for his cus-

tomary pipe of tobacco at the top of the garden.

The restlessness of Suke had indeed owed its presence to the gentleman of Tim's suspicions, but in a different, and, it must be added in justice to her, more innocent sense than he supposed, judging from former doings. She had accidentally discovered that Fitzpiers was in the habit of coming secretly once or twice a week to Hintock, and knew that this evening was a favourite one of the seven for his journey. As she was going next day to leave the country, Suke thought there could be no great harm in giving way to a little sentimentality by obtaining a glimpse of him quite unknown to himself or to anybody, and thus taking a silent last farewell. Aware that Fitzpiers's time for passing was at hand she thus betrayed her feeling. No sooner, therefore, had Tim left the room than she let herself noiselessly out of the house, and hastened to the corner of the garden, whence she could witness the surgeon's transit across the scene—if he had not already gone by.

Her light cotton dress was visible to Tim lounging in the arbour of the opposite corner, though he was hidden from her. He saw her stealthily climb into the hedge, and so ensconce herself there that nobody could have the least doubt her purpose was to watch unseen for a passer-by. He went across to the spot and stood behind her. Suke started, having in her blundering way forgotten that he might be near. She at once descended from the hedge.

"So he's coming to-night," said Tim laconically. "And we be always anxious to see our dears."

"He *is* coming to-night," she replied with defiance. "And we *be* anxious for our dears."

"Then will you step indoors, where your dear will soon jine 'ee? We've to mouser by half-past three to-morrow, and if we don't get to bed by eight at latest our faces will be as long as clock-cases all day."

She hesitated for a minute, but ultimately obeyed, going slowly down the



garden to the house, where he heard the door-latch click behind her.

Tim was incensed beyond measure. His marriage had so far been a total failure, a source of bitter regret; and the only course for improving his case, that of leaving the country, was a sorry, and possibly might not be a very effectual one. Do what he would, his domestic sky was likely to be overcast to the end of the day. Thus he brooded, and his resentment gathered force. He craved a means of striking one blow back at the cause of his cheerless plight, while he was still on the scene of his discomfiture. For some minutes no method suggested itself, and then he had an idea.

Coming to a sudden resolution he hastened along the garden, and entered the one attached to the next cottage, which had formerly been the dwelling of a gamekeeper. Tim descended the path to the back of the house, where only an old woman lived at present, and reaching the wall he stopped. Owing to the slope of the ground the roof-eaves of the lincay were here within touch, and he thrust his arm up under them, feeling about in the space on the top of the wall-plate. With some exertion he drew down a cobwebbed object curiously framed in iron, which clanked as he moved it. It was about three feet in length and half as wide. Tim contemplated it as well as he could in the dying light of day, and raked off the cobwebs with his hand.

"That will spoil his pretty shins for'n, I reckon!" he said.

It was a man-trap.

#### CHAPTER XLVII.

WERE the inventors of automatic machines to be ranged according to the excellence of their devices for producing sound artistic torture, the creator of the man-trap would occupy a very respectable, if not a very high place. It should rather, however, be said, the inventor of the particular form of man-trap of which this found in the keeper's outhouse was a specimen. For

there were other shapes and other sizes, instruments which, if placed in a row beside one of the type disinterred by Tim, would have worn the subordinate aspect of the bears, wild boars, or wolves in a travelling menagerie as compared with the leading lion or tiger. In short, though many varieties had been in use during those centuries which we are accustomed to look back upon as the true and only period of merry England (in the rural districts more especially) and onward down to the third decade of the nineteenth century, this model had borne the palm, and had been most usually followed when the orchards and estates required new ones. There had been the toothless variety used by the softer-hearted landlords, quite contemptible in their clemency. The jaws of these resembled the jaws of an old woman to whom time has left nothing but gums. There were also the intermediate or half-toothed sorts, probably devised by the middle-natured squires, or those under the influence of their wives: two inches of mercy, two inches of cruelty, two inches of mere nip, two inches of probe, and so on, through the whole extent of the jaws. There were also, as a class apart, the bruisers, which did not lacerate the flesh but only crushed the bone.

The sight of one of these gins, when set, produced a vivid impression that it was endowed with life. It exhibited the combined aspects of a shark, a crocodile and a scorpion. Each tooth was in the form of a tapering spine, two and a quarter inches long, which, when the jaws were closed, stood in alternation from this side and from that. When they were open, the two halves formed a complete circle between two and three feet in diameter, the plate, or treading-place, in the midst being about a foot square, while from beneath extended in opposite directions the soul of the apparatus, the pair of springs, each one being of a stiffness to render necessary a lever or the whole weight of the body when forcing it down.

There were men at this time still living at Hintock who remembered when the gin and others like it were in use. Tim Tangs's great-uncle had endured a night of six hours in this very trap, which lamed him for life. Once a keeper of Hintock woods set it on the track of a poacher, and afterwards, coming back that way forgetful of what he had done, walked into it himself. The wound brought on lockjaw, of which he died. This event occurred during the thirties, and by the year 1840 the use of such implements was well nigh discontinued in the neighbourhood. But being made entirely of iron they by no means disappeared, and in almost every village one could be found in some nook or corner as readily as this was found by Tim. It had indeed been a fearful amusement of Tim and other Hintock lads (especially those who had a dim sense of becoming renowned poachers when they reached their prime, to drag out this trap from its hiding, set it, and throw it with billets of wood, which were penetrated by the teeth to the depth of near an inch.

As soon as he had examined the trap, and found that the hinges and springs were still perfect, he shouldered it without more ado, and returned with his burden to his own garden, passing on through the hedge to the path immediately outside the boundary. Here, by the help of a stout stake, he set the trap, and laid it carefully behind a bush while he went forward to reconnoitre. As has been stated, nobody passed this way for days together sometimes; but there was just a possibility that some other pedestrian than the one in request might arrive, and it behoved Tim to be careful as to the identity of his victim. Going about a hundred yards along the rising ground to the right, he reached a ridge whereon a large and thick holly grew. Beyond this for some distance the wood was more open, and the course which Fitzpiers must pursue to reach the point, if he came to-night, was visible a long way forward.

For some time there was no sign of

him or of anybody. Then there shaped itself a spot out of the dim mid-distance, between the masses of brushwood on either hand. As it enlarged Tim could hear the brushing of feet over the tufts of sour grass. The airy gait revealed Fitzpiers even before his exact outline could be seen.

Tim Tangs turned about and ran down the opposite side of the hill, till he was again at the head of his own garden. It was the work of a few moments to drag out the man-trap, very gently (that the plate might not be disturbed sufficiently to throw it) to a space between a pair of young oaks which, rooted in contiguity, grew apart upward, forming a V-shaped opening between; and, being backed up by bushes, left this as the only course for a foot-passenger. Here he laid the trap with the same gentleness of handling, locked the chain round one of the trees, and finally slid back the guard which was placed to keep the gin from accidentally catching the arms of him who set it, or, to use the local and better word, "toiled" it. Having completed these arrangements, Tim sprang through the adjoining hedge of his father's garden, ran down the path, and softly entered the house.

Obedient to his order, Suke had gone to bed; and as soon as he had bolted the door, Tim unlaced and kicked off his boots at the foot of the stairs, and retired likewise, without lighting a candle. His object seemed to be to undress as soon as possible. Before, however, he had completed the operation a long cry resounded without—penetrating, but indescribable.

"What's that?" said Suke, starting up in bed.

"Sounds as if somebody had caught a hare in his gin."

"Oh no," said she. "It was not a hare, 'twas louder. Hark!"

"Do 'ee get to sleep," said Tim. "How be you going to wake at half-past three else?"

She lay down and was silent. Tim stealthily opened the window and listened. Above the low harmonies produced by the instrumentation of



the various species of tree around the premises he could hear the twitching of a chain from the spot whereon he had set the man-trap. But further human sound there was none. Tim was puzzled. In the haste of his project he had not calculated upon a cry; but if one, why not more? He soon ceased to essay an answer, for Hintock was dead to him already. In half-a-dozen hours he would be out of its precincts for life, on his way to the antipodes. He closed the window and lay down.

The hour which had brought these movements of Tim to birth had been operating actively elsewhere. Awaiting in her father's house the minute of her appointment with her husband, Grace Fitzpiers deliberated on many things. Should she inform her father before going out that the estrangement of herself and Edgar was not so complete as he had imagined, and deemed desirable for her happiness? If she did so she must in some measure become the apologist of her husband, and she was not prepared to go so far.

As for him, he kept her in a mood of considerate gravity. He certainly had changed. He had at his worst times always been gentle in his manner towards her. Could it be that she might make of him a true and worthy husband yet? She had married him, there was no getting over that; and ought she any longer to keep him at a distance? His suave deference to her lightest whim on the question of his comings and goings, when as her lawful husband he might have shown a little independence, was a trait in his character as unexpected as it was engaging. If she had been his empress, and he her thrall, he could not have exhibited a more sensitive care to avoid intruding upon her against her will.

Impelled by a remembrance she took down a prayer-book, and turned to the marriage-service. Reading it slowly through she became quite appalled at her recent off-handedness, when she re-discovered what

solemn promises she had made him at those chancel steps not so very long ago. She became lost in long ponderings how far a person's conscience might be bound by vows made without at the time a full recognition of their force. That particular sentence, beginning "Whom God hath joined together," was a staggerer for a gentle woman of strong devotional sentiment. She wondered whether God really did join them together. Before she had done deliberating the time of her engagement drew near, and she went out of the house almost at the moment that Tim Tangs retired to his own.

The position of things at that critical juncture was briefly as follows. Two hundred yards to the right of the upper end of Tangs's garden Fitzpiers was still advancing, having now nearly reached the summit of the wood-clothed ridge, the path being the actual one which further on passed between the two young oaks. Thus far it was according to Tim's conjecture. But about two hundred yards to the left, or rather less, was arising a condition which he had not divined, the emergence of Grace as aforesaid from the upper corner of her father's garden with the view of meeting Tim's intended victim. Midway between husband and wife was the diabolical trap, silent, open, ready.

Fitzpiers's walk that night had been cheerful, for he was convinced that the slow and gentle method he had adopted was promising success. The very restraint that he was obliged to exercise upon himself, so as not to kill the delicate bud of returning confidence, fed his flame. He walked so much more rapidly than Grace that, if they continued advancing as they had begun, he would reach the trap a good half minute before she could reach the same spot. But here a new circumstance came in: to escape the unpleasantness of being watched or listened to by lurkers (naturally curious by reason of their strained relations) they had arranged that their meeting for to-night should be at the holm-tree on the ridge above-

named. So soon, accordingly, as Fitzpiers reached the tree he stood still to await her.

He had not paused under the prickly foliage more than two minutes when he thought he heard a scream from the other side of the ridge. Fitzpiers wondered what it could mean; but such wind as there was just now blew in an adverse direction, and his mood was light. He set down the origin of the sound to one of the superstitious freaks or frolicsome scimmages between sweethearts that still survived in Hintock from old-English times; and waited on where he stood till ten minutes had passed. Feeling then a little uneasy, his mind reverted to the scream; and he went forward over the summit and down the embowered incline, till he reached the pair of sister oaks with the narrow opening between them.

Fitzpiers stumbled and all but fell. Stretching down his hand to ascertain the obstruction it came in contact with a confused mass of silken drapery and ironwork that conveyed absolutely no explanatory idea to his mind at all. It was but the work of a moment to strike a match; and then he saw a sight which congealed his blood.

The man-trap was thrown; and between its jaws was part of a woman's clothing—a patterned silk skirt—gripped with such violence that the iron teeth had passed through it, skewering its tissue in a score of places. He immediately recognised the skirt as that of one of his wife's gowns—the gown that she had worn when she met him on the very last occasion. Fitzpiers had often studied the effect of these instruments when examining the collection at Hintock House; and the conception instantly flashed through him that Grace had been caught, taken out mangled by some chance passer, and carried home, some of her clothes being left behind in the difficulty of getting her free. The shock of this conviction, striking into the very current of high hope, was so great that he cried out like one in corporal agony, and in his misery

bowed himself down to the ground. Of all the degrees and qualities of punishment that Fitzpiers had undergone since his sins against Grace first began, not any even approximated in intensity to this. "Oh, my own—my darling! Oh, cruel Heaven—it is too much this!" he cried, writhing and rocking himself over the sorry accessories of her he deplored.

The voice of his distress was sufficiently loud to be audible to any one who might have been there to hear it; and one there was. Right and left of the narrow pass between the oaks were dense bushes; and now from behind these a female figure glided, whose appearance even in the gloom was, though graceful in outline, noticeably strange. She was in white up to the waist, and figured above. She was, in short, Grace, his wife, lacking the portion of her dress which the gin retained.

"Don't be grieved about me—don't, dear Edgar!" she exclaimed, rushing up and bending over him. "I am not hurt a bit! I was coming on to find you after I had released myself, but I heard footsteps; and I hid away, because I was without some of my clothing, and I did not know who the person might be."

Fitzpiers had sprung to his feet, and his next act was no less unpremeditated by him than it was irresistible by her, and would have been so by any woman not of Amazonian strength. He clasped his arms completely round her, pressed her to his breast, and kissed her passionately.

"You are not dead!—you are not hurt! Thank God—thank God!" he said, almost sobbing in his delight and relief from the horror of his apprehension, "Grace, my wife, my love, how is this—what has happened?"

"I was coming on to you," she said as distinctly as she could in the half-smothered state of her face against his. "I was trying to be as punctual as possible, and as I had started a minute late I ran along the path very swiftly—fortunately for myself. Just when I had passed between these trees

I felt something clutch at my dress from behind with a noise, and the next moment I was pulled backwards by it, and fell to the ground. I screamed with terror, thinking it was a man lying down there to murder me; but the next moment I discovered it was iron, and that my clothes were caught in a trap. I pulled this way and that, but the thing would not let go, drag it as I would, and I did not know what to do. I did not want to alarm my father or anybody, as I wished nobody to know of these meetings with you; so I could think of no other plan than slipping off my skirt, meaning to run on and tell you what a strange accident had happened to me. But when I had just freed myself by leaving the dress behind, I heard steps, and not being sure it was you, I did not like to be seen in such a pickle, so I hid away."

"It was only your speed that saved you! One or both of your legs would have been broken if you had come at ordinary walking pace."

"Or yours, if you had got here first," said she, beginning to realise the whole ghastliness of the possibility. "Oh, Edgar, there has been an Eye watching over us to-night, and we should be thankful indeed!"

He continued to press his face to hers. "You are mine—mine again now."

She gently owned that she supposed she was. "I heard what you said when you thought I was injured," she went on shyly; "and I know that a man who could suffer as you were suffering must have a tender regard for me. But how does this awful thing come here?"

"I suppose it has something to do with poachers." Fitzpiers was still so shaken by the sense of her danger that he was obliged to sit a while, and it was not until Grace said, "If I could only get my skirt out nobody would know anything about it," that he bestirred himself.

By their united efforts, each standing on one of the springs of the trap,

they pressed them down sufficiently to insert across the jaws a billet which they dragged from a faggot near at hand; and it was then possible to extract the silk mouthful from the monster's bite, creased and pierced with many holes, but not torn. Fitzpiers assisted her to put it on again; and when her customary contours were thus restored they walked on together, Grace taking his arm, till he effected an improvement by clasping it round her waist.

The ice having been broken in this unexpected manner she made no further attempt at reserve. "I would ask you to come into the house," she said, "but my meetings with you have been kept secret from my father, and I should like to prepare him."

"Never mind, dearest. I could not very well have accepted the invitation. I shall never live here again—as much for your sake as for mine. I have news to tell you on this very point, but my alarm had put it out of my head. I have bought a practice, or rather a partnership, in the Midlands, and I must go there in a week to take up permanent residence. My poor old great-aunt died about eight months ago, and left me enough to do this. I have taken a little furnished house for a time, till we can get one of our own."

He described the place, and the surroundings, and the view from the windows; and Grace became much interested. "But why are you not there now?" she said.

"Because I cannot tear myself away from here till I have your promise. Now, darling, you will accompany me there—will you not? To-night has settled that!"

Grace's tremblings had gone off, and she did not say nay. They went on together.

The adventure, and the emotions consequent upon the reunion which that event had forced on, combined to render Grace oblivious of the direction of their desultory ramble, till she noticed they were in an encircled

glade in the densest part of the wood, whereon the moon, that had imperceptibly added its rays to the scene, shone almost vertically. It was an exceptionally soft, balmy evening for the time of year, which was just that transient period in the May month when beech trees have suddenly unfolded large limp young leaves of the softness of butterflies' wings. Boughs bearing such leaves hung low around and completely inclosed them, so that it was as if they were in a great green vase, which had moss for its bottom and leafy sides.

The clouds having been packed in the west that evening so as to retain the departing glare a long while, the hour had seemed much earlier than it was. But suddenly the question of time occurred to her.

"I must go back," she said; and without further delay they set their faces towards Hintock. As they walked he examined his watch by the aid of the now strong moonlight.

"By the gods, I think I have lost my train!" said Fitzpiers.

"Dear me—whereabouts are we?" said she.

"Two miles in the direction of Sherton."

"Then do you hasten on, Edgar. I am not in the least afraid. I recognise now the part of the wood we are in, and I can find my way back quite easily. I'll tell my father that we have made it up. I wish I had not kept our meetings so private, for it may vex him a little to know I have been seeing you. He is getting old and irritable, that was why I did not. Good-bye."

"But, as I must stay at the Earl of Wessex to-night, for I cannot possibly catch the train, I think it would be safer for you to let me take care of you."

"But what will my father think has become of me! He does not know in the least where I am—he thinks I only went into the garden for a few minutes."

"He will surely guess—somebody

has seen me for certain. I'll go all the way back with you to-morrow."

"But that newly done-up place—the Earl of Wessex!"

"If you are so very particular about the publicity I will stay at the Three Tuns."

"Oh no—it is not that I am particular—but I haven't a brush or comb or anything!"

#### CHAPTER XLVIII.

ALL the evening Melbury had been coming to his door saying, "I wonder where in the world that girl is! Never in all my born days did I know her bide out like this! She surely said she was going into the garden to get some parsley."

Melbury searched the garden, the parsley-bed, and the orchard, but could find no trace of her; and then he made inquiries at the cottages of such of his workmen as had not gone to bed, avoiding Tangs's because he knew the young people were to rise early to leave. In these inquiries one of the men's wives somewhat incautiously let out the fact that she had heard a scream in the wood, though from which direction she could not say.

This set Melbury's fears on end. He told the men to light lanterns, and headed by himself they started: Creedle following at the last moment with quite a burden of grapnels and ropes which he could not be persuaded to leave behind; and the company being joined by the hollow-turner and the man who kept the cider-house as they went along.

They explored the precincts of the village, and in a short time lighted upon the man-trap. Its discovery simply added an item of fact without helping their conjectures; but Melbury's indefinite alarm was greatly increased when, holding a candle to the ground, he saw in the teeth of the instrument some frayings from Grace's clothing. No intelligence of any kind was gained till they met a woodman of Delborough, who said that he had

seen a lady answering to the description her father gave of Grace, walking through the wood on a gentleman's arm in the direction of Sherton.

"Was he clutching her tight?" said Melbury.

"Well—rather," said the man.

"Did she walk lame?"

"Well, 'tis true her head hung over towards him a bit."

Creedle groaned tragically.

Melbury, not suspecting the presence of Fitzpiers, coupled this account with the man trap and the scream. He could not understand what it all meant; but the sinister event of the trap made him follow on. Accordingly, they bore away towards the town, shouting as they went, and in due course emerged upon the highway. Nearing Sherton-Abbas, the previous information was confirmed by other strollers, though the gentleman's supporting arm had disappeared from these later accounts. At last they were so near Sherton that Melbury informed his faithful followers that he did not wish to drag them further at so late an hour, since he could go on alone and inquire if the woman who had been seen were really Grace. But they would not leave him alone in his anxiety, and trudged onward till the lamplight from the town began to illuminate their fronts. At the entrance to the High Street they got fresh scent of the pursued, but coupled with the new condition that the lady in the costume described had been going up the street alone.

"Faith, I believe she's mesmerised, or walking in her sleep!" said Melbury.

However, the identity of this woman with Grace was by no means certain; but they plodded along the street. The hairdresser who had despoiled Marty of her tresses was standing at his door, and they duly put inquiries to him.

"Ah—how's Little Hintock folk by now!" he said before replying. "Never have I been over there since one winter night some three year ago—and then I lost myself finding it. How

can ye live in such a one-eyed place? Great Hintock is bad enough; but Little Hintock—the bats and owls would drive me melancholy-mad! It took two days to raise my sperrits to their true pitch again after that night I went there. Mr. Melbury, sir, as a man that's put by money, why not retire and live here, and see something of the world?"

The responses at last given by him to their queries guided them to the building that offered the best accommodation in Sherton, having been enlarged contemporaneously with the construction of the railway—namely, The Earl of Wessex Hotel.

Leaving the others without, Melbury made prompt inquiry here. His alarm was lessened, though his perplexity was increased, when he received a brief reply that such a lady was in the kouse.

"Do you know if it is my daughter?" asked Melbury.

The waiter did not.

"Do you know the lady's name?"

Of this, too, the household was ignorant, the hotel having been taken by brand-new people from a distance. They knew the gentleman very well by sight, and had not thought it necessary to ask him to enter his name.

"Oh, the gentleman appears again now," said Melbury to himself. "Well, I want to see the lady," he declared.

A message was taken up, and after some delay the shape of Grace appeared descending round the bend of the staircase, looking as if she lived there, but in other respects rather guilty and frightened.

"Why, what the name—" began her father. "I thought you went out to get parsley!"

"Oh, yes—I did—but it is all right," said Grace in a flurried whisper. "I am not alone here. I am here with Edgar. It is entirely owing to an accident, father."

"Edgar! An accident! How does he come here? I thought he was two hundred miles off."

"Yes; so he is—I mean he has got a beautiful practice two hundred miles

off: he has bought it with his own money, some that came to him. But he travelled here, and I was nearly caught in a man-trap, and that's how it is I am here. We were just thinking of sending a messenger to let you know."

Melbury did not seem to be particularly enlightened by this explanation.

"You were caught in a man-trap?"

"Yes; my dress was. That's how it arose. Edgar is up stairs in his own sitting-room," she went on. "He would not mind seeing you, I am sure."

"Oh, faith, I don't want to see him! I have seen him too often a'ready. I'll see him another time, perhaps, if 'tis to oblige 'ee."

"He came to see me; he wanted to consult me about this large partnership I speak of, as it is very promising."

"Oh, I am glad to hear it," said Melbury drily.

A pause ensued, during which the inquiring faces and whitey-brown clothes of Melbury's companions appeared in the doorway.

"Then baint you coming home with us?" he asked.

"I—I think not," said Grace, blushing.

"H'm—very well—you are your own mistress," he returned in tones which seemed to assert otherwise. "Good-night;" and Melbury retreated towards the door.

"Don't be angry, father," she said, following him a few steps. "I have done it for the best."

"I am not angry, though it is true I have been a little misled in this. However, good-night. I must get home along."

He left the hotel, not without relief, for to be under the eyes of strangers while he conversed with his lost child had embarrassed him much. His search-party, too, had looked awkward there, having rushed to the task of investigation—some in their shirt-sleeves, others in their leather aprons, and all much stained—just as they had come from their work of barking, and not in their Sherton marketing attire; while

Creedle, with his ropes and grapnels and air of impending tragedy, had added melancholy to gawkiness.

"Now, neighbours," said Melbury, on joining them, "as it is getting late we'll leg it home again as fast as we can. I ought to tell you that there has been some mistake—some arrangement entered into between Mr. and Mrs. Fitzpiers which I didn't quite understand—an important practice in the Midland counties has come to him, which made it necessary for her to join him to-night—so she says. That's all it was; and I'm sorry I dragged you out."

"Well," said the hollow-turner, "here be we six mile from home, and night-time, and not a hoss or four-footed creeping thing to our name. I say, we'll have a mossel and a drop o' summat to strengthen our nerves afore we vamp all the way back again? My throat's as dry as a kex. What d'ye say so's?"

They all concurred in the need for this course, and proceeded to the antique and lampless back-street in which the red curtain of the Three Tuns was the only radiant object. As soon as they had stumbled down into the room Melbury ordered them to be served, when they made themselves comfortable by the long table, and stretched out their legs upon the herring-boned sand of the floor. Melbury himself, restless as usual, walked to the door while he waited for them, and looked up and down the street.

"I'd gie her a good shaking if she were my maid; pretending to go out in garden, and leading folk a twelve-mile traipse that have got to get up at five o'clock to-morrow," said a bark-ripper; who, not working regularly for Melbury, could afford to indulge in strong opinions.

"I don't speak so warm as that," said the hollow-turner; "but if 'tis right for couples to make a country talk about their separating, and excite the neighbours, and then make fools of 'em like this, why, I haven't stood upon one leg for five-and-twenty year."



All his listeners knew that when he alluded to his foot-lathe in these enigmatic terms, the speaker meant to be impressive; and Creedle chimed in with, "Ah, young women do wax wanton in these days! Why couldn't she ha' bode with her father, and been faithful." Poor Creedle was thinking of his old employer.

"But this deceiving of folks is nothing unusual in matrimony," said Farmer Bawtree. "I knowed a man and wife—faith, I don't mind owning, as there's no strangers here, that the pair were my own relations—they'd be at it that hot one hour that you'd hear the poker, and the tongs, and the bellows, and the warming-pan flee across the house with the movements of their vengeance; and the next hour you'd hear 'em singing 'The Spotted Cow' together as peaceable as two holy twins; yes—and very good voices they had, and would strike in like professional ballet-singers to one another's support in the high notes."

"And I knowed a woman, and the husband o' her went away for four-and-twenty year," said the bark-ripper. "And one night he came home when she was sitting by the fire, and thereupon he sat down himself on the other side of the chimney-corner. 'Well,' says she, 'have ye got any news?' 'Don't know as I have,' says he; 'have you?' 'No,' says she, 'except that my daughter by my second husband was married last month, which was a year after I was made a widow by him.' 'Oh! Anything else?' he says. 'No,' says she. And there they sat, one on each side of that chimney-corner, and were found by the neighbours sound asleep in their chairs, not having known what to talk about at all."

"Well, I don't care who the man is," said Creedle, "they required a good deal to talk about, and that's true. It won't be the same with these."

"No. He is such a projick, you see. And she is a wonderful scholar too!"

"What women do know nowadays!"

observed the hollow-turner. "You can't deceive 'em as you could in my time."

"What they knowed then was not small," said Upjohn. "Always a good deal more than the men! Why, when I went courting my wife that is now, the skilfulness that she would show in keeping me on her pretty side as she walked was beyond all belief. Perhaps you've noticed that she's got a pretty side to her face as well as a plain one?"

"I can't say I've noticed it particular much," said the hollow-turner blandly.

"Well," continued Upjohn, not disconcerted, "she has. All women under the sun be prettier one side than t'other. And, as I was saying, the pains she would take to make me walk on the pretty side were unending! I warrant that whether we were going with the sun or against the sun, uphill or downhill, in wind or in lewth, that wart of hers was always towards the hedge, and that dimple towards me. There was I, too simple to see her wheelings and turnings; and she so artful, though two years younger, that she could lead me with a cotton thread, like a blind ram; for that was in the third climate of our courtship. . . . No; I don't think the women have got cleverer, for they was never otherwise."

"How many climates may there be in courtship, Mr. Upjohn?" inquired a youth—the same who had assisted at Winterborne's Christmas party.

"Five, from the coolest to the hottest: leastwise there was five in mine."

"Can ye give us the chronicle of 'em, Mr. Upjohn?"

"Yes—I could. I could certainly. But 'tis quite unnecessary. They'll come to ye by nater, young man, too soon for your good."

"At present Mrs. Fitzpiers can lead the doctor as your mis'ess could lead you," the hollow-turner remarked. "She's got him quite tame. But how long 'twill last I can't say. I happened to be setting a wire on the

top of my garden one night when he met her on the other side of the hedge ; and the way she queened it and fenced and kept that poor feller at a distance was enough to freeze yer blood. I should never have supposed it of such a girl."

Melbury now returned to the room, and the men having declared themselves refreshed, they all started on the homeward journey, which was by no means cheerless under the rays of the high moon. Having to walk the whole distance they came by a footpath rather shorter than the highway, though difficult except to those who knew the country well. This brought them by way of Great Hintock ; and passing the churchyard they observed as they talked a motionless figure standing by the gate.

"I think it was Marty South," said the hollow-turner parenthetically.

"I think 'twas ; 'a was always a lonely maid," said Upjohn. And they passed on homeward, and thought of the matter no more.

It was Marty, as they had supposed. That evening had been the particular one of the week upon which Grace and herself had been accustomed to privately deposit flowers on Giles's grave, and this was the first occasion since his death eight months earlier on which Grace had failed to keep her appointment. Marty had waited in the road just outside Little Hintock, where her fellow-pilgrim had been wont to join her, till she was weary ; and at last, thinking that Grace had missed her and gone on alone, she followed the way to Great Hintock, but saw no Grace in front of her. It got later, and Marty continued her walk till she reached the churchyard gate ; but still no Grace. Yet her sense of comradeship would not allow her to go on to the grave alone, and, still thinking the delay had been unavoidable, she

stood there with her little basket of flowers in her clasped hands, and her feet chilled by the damp ground, till more than two hours had passed. She then heard the footsteps of Melbury's men, who presently passed on their return from the search. In the silence of the night Marty could not help hearing fragments of their conversation, from which she acquired a general idea of what had occurred, and where Mrs. Fitzpiers then was.

Immediately they had dropped down the hill she entered the churchyard, going to a secluded corner behind the bushes where rose the unadorned stone that marked the last bed of Giles Winterborne. As this solitary and silent girl stood there in the moonlight, a straight slim figure, clothed in a plaitless gown, the contours of womanhood so undeveloped as to be scarcely perceptible, the marks of poverty and toil effaced by the misty hour, she touched sublimity at points, and looked almost like a being who had rejected with indifference the attribute of sex for the loftier quality of abstract humanism. She stooped down and cleared away the withered flowers that Grace and herself had laid there the previous week, and put her fresh ones in their place.

"Now, my own own love," she whispered, "you are mine, and on'y mine ; for she has forgot 'ee at last, although for her you died. But I—whenever I get up I'll think of 'ee, and whenever I lie down I'll think of 'ee. Whenever I plant the young larches I'll think that none can plant as you planted ; and whenever I split a gad, and whenever I turn the cider-wring, I'll say none could do it like you. If ever I forget your name let me forget home and heaven ! . . . . But no, no, my love, I never can forget 'ee ; for you was a good man, and did good things !"



## WILLIAM HAZLITT.

THE following paper was in great part composed when I came across some sentences on Hazlitt, written indeed before I was born, but practically unpublished until the other day. In a review of the late Mr. Horne's *New Spirit of the Age*, contributed to the *Morning Chronicle* forty-two years ago, and but recently included in his collected works, Thackeray writes thus of the author of the book whose title Horne had rather rashly borrowed :

"The author of the *Spirit of the Age* was one of the keenest and brightest critics that ever lived. With partialities and prejudices innumerable, he had a wit so keen, a sensibility so exquisite, an appreciation of humour, or pathos, or even of the greatest art, so lively, quick, and cultivated, that it was always good to know what were the impressions made by books or men or pictures on such a mind ; and that, as there were not probably a dozen men in England with powers so varied, all the rest of the world might be rejoiced to listen to the opinions of this accomplished critic. He was of so different a caste to the people who gave authority in his day—the pompous big-wigs and schoolmen, who never could pardon him his familiarity of manner so unlike their own—his popular—too popular—habits and sympathies so much beneath their dignity ; his loose, disorderly education gathered round those bookstalls or picture-galleries where he laboured a penniless student, in lonely journeys over Europe tramped on foot (and not made, after the fashion of the regular critics of the day, by the side of a young nobleman in a postchaise), in every school of knowledge from St. Peter's at Rome to St. Giles's in London. In all his modes of life and thought he was so different from the established authorities with their degrees and white neckcloths, that they hooted the man down with all the power of their lungs, and disdained to hear truth that came from such a ragged philosopher."

Some exceptions, no doubt, must be taken to this enthusiastic, and in the main just, verdict. Hazlitt himself denied himself wit, yet if this was mock humility, I am inclined to think that he spoke truth unwittingly. His appreciation of humour was fitful

and anything but impartial, and, biographically speaking, the hardships of his apprenticeship are very considerably exaggerated. It was not, for instance, in a penniless or pedestrian manner that he visited St. Peter's at Rome ; but journeying comfortably with surroundings of wine, *vetturini*, and partridges, which his second wife's income paid for. But this does not matter much, and, on the whole, the estimate is as just as it is generous. Perhaps something of its inspiration may be set down to fellow-feeling both in politics and in the unsuccessful cultivation of the arts of design. But as high an estimate of Hazlitt is quite compatible with the strongest political dissent from his opinions, and with a total freedom from the charge of wearing the willow for painting.

There is indeed no doubt that Hazlitt is one of the most absolutely unequal writers in English, if not in any, literature, Wilson being perhaps his only compeer. The term absolute is used with intention and precision. There may be others who in different parts of their work are more unequal than he is ; but with him the inequality is pervading, and shows itself in his finest passages, in those where he is most at home, as much as in his hastiest and most uncongenial taskwork. It could not, indeed, be otherwise, because the inequality itself is due less to an intellectual than to a moral defect. The clear sunshine of Hazlitt's admirably acute intellect is always there ; but it is constantly obscured by driving clouds of furious prejudice. Even as the clouds pass, the light may still be seen on distant and scattered parts of the landscape ; but wherever their influence extends there is nothing but thick darkness, gusty wind and drenching rain. And the two phenomena,

the abiding intellectual light and the fits and squalls of moral darkness, appear to be totally independent of each other, or of any single will or cause of any kind. It would be perfectly easy, and may perhaps be in place later, to give a brief collection of some of the most absurd and outrageous sayings that any writer not a mere fool can be charged with: of sentences not representing quips and cranks of humour, or judgments temporary and one-sided, though having a certain relative validity, but containing blunders and calumnies so gross and palpable that the man who set them down might seem to have forfeited all claim to the reputation either of an intelligent or a responsible being. And yet side by side with these are other passages (and fortunately a much greater number) which justify, and more than justify, Hazlitt's claims to be, as Thackeray says, "one of the keenest and brightest writers that ever lived;" as Lamb had said earlier "one of the wisest and finest spirits breathing."

The only exception to be taken to the well-known panegyric of Elia is, that it bestows this eulogy on Hazlitt "in his natural and healthy state." Unluckily, it would seem, by a concurrence of all testimony, even the most partial, that the unhealthy state was quite as natural as the healthy one. Lamb himself plaintively wishes that "he would not quarrel with the world at the rate he does"; and De Quincey, in his short, but very interesting, biographical notice of Hazlitt (a notice entirely free from the malignity with which De Quincey has been sometimes charged), declares with quite as much truth as point, that Hazlitt's guiding principle was, "Whatever is, is wrong." He was the very ideal of a literary Ishmael; and after the fullest admission of the almost incredible virulence and unfairness of his foes, it has to be admitted, likewise, that he was quite as ready to quarrel with his friends. He succeeded at least once in forcing a quarrel even

upon Lamb. His relations with Leigh Hunt (who, whatever his faults were, was not unamiable) were constantly strained, and at least once actually broken by his infernal temper. Nor were his relations with women more fortunate or more creditable than those with men. That the fault was entirely on his side in the rupture with his first wife is, no doubt, not the case; for Mrs. Hazlitt's, or Miss Stoddart's, own friends admit that she was of a peculiar and rather trying disposition. It is indeed evident that she was the sort of person (most trying of all others to a man of Hazlitt's temperament) who would put her head back as he was kissing her to ask if he would like another cup of tea, or interrupt a declaration to suggest shutting the window. As for the famous and almost legendary episode of Sarah Walker, the lodging-house keeper's daughter, and the *Liber Amoris*, the obvious and irresistible attack of something like erotic madness which it implies absolves Hazlitt partly—but only partly; for there is a kind of shabbiness about the affair which shuts it out from all reasonable claim to be regarded as a new act of the endless drama of "All for Love, or The World Well Lost!" Of his second marriage, the only persons who might be expected to give us some information either can or will say next to nothing. But when a man with such antecedents marries a woman of whom no one has anything bad to say, lives with her for a year chiefly on her money, and is then quitted by her with the information that she will have nothing more to do with him, it is not, I think, uncharitable to conjecture that most of the fault is his.

It is not, however, only of Hazlitt's rather imperfectly known life, or of his pretty generally acknowledged character, that I wish to speak here. His strange mixture of manly commonsense and childish prejudice, the dislike of foreigners which accompanied his Liberalism and his Bonapartism, and

other traits, are very much more English than Irish. But Irish, at least on the father's side, his family was, and had been for generations. He was himself the son of a Unitarian minister, was born at Maidstone in 1778, accompanied his parents as a very little boy to America, but passed the greater part of his youth at Wem in Shropshire, where the interview with Coleridge, which decided his fate, took place. Yet for some time after that he was mainly occupied with studies, not of literature, but of art. He had been intended for his father's profession, but had early taken a disgust to it. At such schools as he had been able to frequent he had gained the character of a boy rather insusceptible of ordinary teaching; and his letters (they are rare throughout his life) show him to us as something very like a juvenile prig. According to his own account, he "thought for at least eight years" without being able to pen a line, or at least a page; and the worst accusation that can be brought against him (it is an accusation which his Tory foes never dreamt of bringing, and which is based on his own and his grandson's confessions) is, that when he began to write he left off reading. Those of us who (for their sins or for their good) are condemned to a life of writing for the press know that such an abstinence as this is almost fatal. Perhaps no man ever did good work in periodical writing unless he had previously had a more or less prolonged period of reading with no view to writing. Certainly no one ever did other than very faulty work if, not having such a store to draw on, when he began writing he left off reading.

The first really important event in Hazlitt's life, except the visit from Coleridge in 1798, was his own visit to Paris after the Peace of Amiens in 1802—a visit authorised and defrayed by certain commissions to copy pictures at the Louvre, which was then, in consequence of French conquests, the picture-gallery of Europe. The chief of these commissioners was a Mr.

Railton, a person of some fortune at Liverpool, and, unless John Hazlitt, the critic's brother, was a man of genius, the father of a daughter who had one of the most beautiful faces of modern times. Miss Railton was one of Hazlitt's many loves: it was, perhaps, fortunate for her that the course of the love did not run smooth. Almost immediately on his return he made acquaintance with the Lambs, and, as Mr. W. C. Hazlitt, his grandson and biographer thinks, with Miss Stoddart, his future wife. Miss Stoddart, there is no doubt, was an elderly coquette, though perfectly "proper." Besides the "William" of her early correspondence with Mary Lamb, we hear of three or four other lovers of hers between 1803 and 1808, when she married Hazlitt. It so happens that one, and only one, letter of his to her has been preserved. His biographer seems to think it in another sense "unique;" but it is, in effect, a very typical letter from a literary lover of a rather passionate temperament. The two were married, in defiance of superstition, on Sunday, the first of May; and certainly the superstition had not the worst of it.

At first, however, no evil results seemed likely. Miss Stoddart had a certain property settled on her at Winterslow, on the south-eastern border of Salisbury Plain, and for nearly four years the couple seem to have dwelt there, once, at least, entertaining the Lambs, and producing children, of whom only one lived. It was not till 1812 that they removed to London, and that Hazlitt engaged in writing for the newspapers. From this time till the end of his life, some eighteen years, he was never at a loss for employment—a succession of daily and weekly papers, with occasional employment on the *Edinburgh Review*, providing him, it would seem, with sufficiently abundant opportunities for copy. The *London*, the *New Monthly* (where Campbell's dislike did him no harm), and other magazines also employed him. For a time he seems to have

joined "the gallery" and written ordinary press-work. During this time, which was very short, and this time only, his friends admit a certain indulgence in drinking, which he gave up completely, but which was used against him with as much pitilessness as indecency in *Blackwood*; though heaven only knows how the most Tory soul living could see fitness of things in the accusation of gin-drinking brought against Hazlitt by the whisky-drinkers of the *Noctes*. For the greater part of his literary life he seems to have been almost a teetotaller, indulging only in the very strongest of tea. He soon gave up miscellaneous press-work, as far as politics went; but his passion for the theatre retained him as a theatrical critic almost to the end of his life. He gradually drifted into the business really best suited to him, that of essay-writing, and occasionally lecturing on literary and miscellaneous subjects. During the greatest part of his early London life he was resident in a famous house, now destroyed, in York street, Westminster, next door to Bentham and reputed to have once been tenanted by Milton; and he was a constant attendant on Lamb's Wednesday evenings. The details of his life, it has been said, are not much known. The chief of them, besides the breaking out of his life-long war with *Blackwood* and the *Quarterly*, was, perhaps, his unlucky participation in the duel which proved fatal to Scott, the editor of the *London*. It is impossible to imagine a more deplorable muddle than this affair. Scott, after refusing the challenge of Lockhart, with whom he had, according to the customs of those days, a sufficient ground of quarrel, accepted that of Christie, Lockhart's second, with whom he had no quarrel at all. Moreover, when his adversary had deliberately spared him in the first fire, he insisted (it is said owing to the stupid conduct of his own seconds) on another, and was mortally wounded. Hazlitt, who was more than indirectly concerned in the affair, had a professed objection to duel-

ling, which would have been more creditable to him if he had not been avowedly of a timid temper. But, most unfortunately, he was said, and believed, to have spurred Scott on to the acceptance of the challenge, nor do his own champions deny it. The scandal is long bygone, but is unluckily a fair sample of the ugly stories which cluster round Hazlitt's name, and which have hitherto prevented that justice being done to him which his abilities deserve and demand.

This wretched affair occurred in February, 1821, and shortly afterwards the crowning complication of Hazlitt's own life, the business of the *Liber Amoris* and the divorce with his first wife, took place. The first could only be properly described by an abundance of extracts for which there is here no room. Of the second, which, it must be remembered, went on simultaneously with the first, it is sufficient to say that the circumstances are nearly incredible. It was conducted under the Scotch law with a blessed indifference to collusion: the direct means taken to effect it were, if report may be trusted, scandalous; and the parties met during the whole time, and placidly wrangled over money matters, with a callousness which is ineffably disgusting. I have hinted, in reference to Sarah Walker, that the tyranny of "Love unconquered in battle" may be taken by a very charitable person to be a sufficient excuse. In this other affair there is no such palliation; unless the very charitable person should hold that a wife, who could so forget her own dignity, justified any forgetfulness on the part of her husband; and that a husband, who could haggle and chaffer about the terms on which he should be disgracefully separated from his wife, justified any forgetfulness of dignity on the wife's part.

Little has to be said about the rest of Hazlitt's life. Miss Sarah Walker would have nothing to say to him; and it has been already mentioned that the lady whom he afterwards

married, a Mrs. Bridgewater, had enough of him after a year's experience. He did not outlive this last shock more than five years; and unfortunately his death was preceded by a complete financial break-down, though he was more industrious during these later years than at any other time, and though he had abundance of well-paid work. The failure of the publishers, who were to have paid him five hundred pounds for his *magnum opus*, the one-sided and almost valueless *Life of Napoleon*, had something to do with this, and the dishonesty of an agent is said to have had more, but details are not forthcoming. He died on the eighteenth of September, 1830, saying, "Well, I have had a happy life"; and despite his son's assertion that, like Goldsmith, he had something on his mind, I believe this to have been not ironical but quite sincere. He was only fifty-two, so that the infirmities of age had not begun to press on him. Although, except during the brief duration of his second marriage, he had always lived by his wits, it does not appear that he was ever in any want, or that he had at any time to deny himself his favourite pleasures of wandering about and being idle when he chose. If he had not been completely happy in his life, he had lived it: if he had not seen the triumph of his opinions, he had been able always to hold to them. He was one of those men, such as an extreme devotion to literature now and then breeds, who, by the intensity of their enjoyment of quite commonplace delights—a face passed in the street, a sunset, a quiet hour of reflection, even a well-cooked meal—make up for the suffering of not wholly commonplace woes. I do not know whether even the joy of literary battle did not outweigh the pain of the dishonest wounds which he received from illiberal adversaries. I think that he had a happy life, and I am glad that he had. For he was in literature a great man. I am myself disposed to think that, for all his accessions of hopelessly uncritical prejudice, he

was the greatest critic that England has yet produced; and there are some who think (though I do not agree with them) that he was even greater as a miscellaneous essayist than as a critic. It is certainly upon his essays, critical and other, that his fame must rest; not on the frenzied outpourings of the *Liber Amoris*, or upon the one-sided and ill-planned *Life of Napoleon*; still less on his clever-boy essay on the *Principles of Human Action*, or on his attempts in grammar, in literary compilation and abridgment, and the like. Seven volumes of Bohn's Standard Library, with another published elsewhere containing his writings on Art, contain nearly all the documents of Hazlitt's fame: a few do not seem to have been yet collected from his *Remains* and from the publications in which they originally appeared.

These books—the *Spirit of the Age*, *Table-Talk*, *The Plain Speaker*, *The Round Table* (including the *Conversations with Northcote and Characteristics*), *Lectures on the English Poets and Comic Writers*, *Elizabethan Literature and Characters of Shakespeare, Sketches and Essays* (including *Winterslow*)—represent the work, roughly speaking, of the last twenty years of Hazlitt's life; for in the earlier and longer period he wrote very little, and indeed declares that for a long time he had a difficulty in writing at all. They are all singularly homogeneous in general character, the lectures written as lectures differing very little from the essays written as essays, and even the frantic diatribes of the "Letter to Gifford" bearing a strong family likeness to the good-humoured reporting of the "On Going to a Fight," or the singularly picturesque and pathetic egotism of the "Farewell to Essay-Writing." This family resemblance is the more curious because, independently of the diversity of subject, Hazlitt can hardly be said to possess a style or, at least, a manner—indeed, he somewhere or other distinctly disclaims the possession. Yet, irregular as he is in his fashion of writing, no less than in the merit of it, the germs of some of the most famous



styles of this century may be discovered in his casual and haphazard work. Everybody knows Jeffrey's question to Macaulay, "Where the devil did you get that style?" If any one will read Hazlitt (who, be it remembered, was a contributor to the *Edinburgh*) carefully, he will see where Macaulay got that style, or at least the beginning of it, much as he improved on it afterwards. Nor is there any doubt that, in a very different way, Hazlitt served as a model to Thackeray, to Dickens, and to many not merely of the most popular but of the greatest writers of the middle of the century. Indeed, in the *Spirit of the Age* there are distinct anticipations of Carlyle. He had the not uncommon fate of producing work which, little noted by the public, struck those of his juniors who had any literary faculty very strongly. If he had been just by a little a greater man than he was, he would, no doubt, have elaborated an individual manner, and not contented himself with the hints and germs of manners. As it was, he had more of seed than of fruit. And the secret of this is, undoubtedly, to be found in the obstinate individuality of thought which characterised him all through. Hazlitt may sometimes have adopted an opinion precisely because other people did not hold it, but he never adopted an opinion because other people did hold it. And all his opinions, even those which seem to have been adopted simply to quarrel with the world, were genuine opinions. He has himself drawn a striking contrast in this point between himself and Lamb in one of the very best of all his essays, the beautiful "Farewell to Essay-Writing" reprinted in *Winter-stow*. The contrast is a remarkable one, and most men, probably, who take great interest in literature or politics, or indeed in any subject admitting of principles, will be able to furnish similar contrasts from their own experience.

"In matters of taste and feeling, one proof that my conclusions have not been quite shallow and hasty is the circumstance of their having been lasting. I have the same favourite

books, pictures, passages that I ever had; I may therefore presume that they will last me my life—nay, I may indulge a hope that my thoughts will survive me. This continuity of impression is the only thing on which I pride myself. Even Lamb, whose relish of certain things is as keen and earnest as possible, takes a surfeit of admiration, and I should be afraid to ask about his select authors or particular friends after a lapse of ten years. As for myself, any one knows where to have me. What I have once made up my mind to, I abide by to the end of the chapter."

This is quite true if we add a proviso to it—a proviso, to be sure, of no small importance. Hazlitt is always the same when he is not different, when his political or personal ails and angers do not obscure his critical judgment. His uniformity of principle extends only to the two subjects of literature and of art; unless a third may be added, to wit, the various good things of this life, as they are commonly called. He was not so great a metaphysician as he thought himself. He "shows to the utmost of his knowledge, and that not deep"; a want of depth not surprising when we find him confessing that he had to go to Taylor, the Platonist, to tell him something of Platonic ideas. It may be more than suspected that he had read little but the French and English philosophers of the eighteenth century: a very interesting class of persons, but, except Condillac, Hume and Berkeley, scarcely metaphysicians. As for his politics, Hazlitt seems to me to have had no clear political creed at all. He hated something called "the hag legitimacy," but for the hag despotism, in the person of Bonaparte, he had nothing but love. How any one possessed of brains could combine Liberty and the first Napoleon in one common worship is, I confess, a mystery too great for me; and I fear that any one who could call "Jupiter Scapin" "the greatest man who ever lived," must be entirely blind to such constituents of greatness as justice, mercy, chivalry, and all that makes a gentleman. Indeed, I fear that "gentleman" is exactly what cannot

be predicated of Hazlitt. No gentleman could have published the *Liber Amoris*, not at all because of its so-called voluptuousness, but because of its shameless "kissing and telling." But the most curious example of Hazlitt's weaknesses is the language he uses in regard to those men with whom he had both political and literary differences. That he had provocation in some cases (he had absolutely none from Sir Walter Scott) is perfectly true. But what provocation will excuse such things as the following, all taken from one book, the *Spirit of the Age*? He speaks of Scott's "zeal to restore the spirit of loyalty, of passive obedience, and of non-resistance, as an acknowledgment for his having been created a baronet by a prince of the House of Brunswick." Alas! for dates and circumstances, for times and seasons, when they stand in the way of a fling of Hazlitt's. In the character of Scott himself an entire page and a half is devoted to an elaborate peroration in one huge sentence, denouncing him in such terms as "pettifogging," "littleness," "pique," "secret and envenomed blows," "slime of rankling malice and mercenary scorn," "trammels of servility," "lies," "garbage," &c., &c. The Duke of Wellington he always speaks of as a brainless noodle, forgetting apparently that the description does not exactly make his idol's defeat more creditable to the vanquished. As for the character of Gifford, and the earlier "Letter to Gifford," I should have to print them entire to show the state of Hazlitt's mind in regard to this notorious, and certainly not very amiable, person. His own words, "the dotage of age and the fury of a woman," form the best short description of both. He screams, he foams at the mouth, he gnashes and tears and kicks, rather than fights. Nor is it only on living authors and living persons (as some of his unfavourable critics have said) that he exercises his spleen. His remarks on Burke (*Round Table*, p.

150) suggest temporary insanity. Sir Philip Sidney (as Lamb, a perfectly impartial person who had no politics at all, pointed out) was a kind of representative of the courtly monarchist school in literature. So down must Sir Philip go; and not only the *Arcadia*, that "vain and amatorious poem" which Milton condemned, but the sonnets which one would have thought such a lover of poetry as Hazlitt must have spared, go down also before his remorseless bludgeon.

But there is no need to say any more of these faults of his, and there is no need to say much of another and more purely literary fault with which he has been charged—the fault of excessive quotation. In him the error lies rather in the constant repetition of the same than in a too great multitude of different borrowings. Almost priding himself on limited study, and (as he tells us) very rarely reading his own work after it was printed, he has certainly abused his right of press most damnably in some cases: "dry as a remainder biscuit," and of "no mark or likelihood," occur to me as the most constantly recurrent tags, but there are many others.

These various drawbacks, however, only set off the merits which almost every lover of literature must perceive in him. In most writers, in all save the very greatest, we look for one or two, or for a few special faculties and capacities, and we know perfectly well that other (generally many other) capacities and faculties will not be found in them at all. We do not dream of finding rollicking mirth in Milton, or gorgeous embroidery of style in Swift, or unadorned simplicity in Browne. But in Hazlitt you may find something of almost everything, except the finer kinds of wit and humour; to which last, however, he makes a certain side approach by dint of his appreciation of the irony of Nature and Fate. Almost every other grace of matter and form that can be found in prose may be found at times in his. He is generally thought of

as, and for the most part is, a rather plain and straightforward writer, with few tricks and frounces of phrase and style. Yet most of the fine writing of these latter days is but as crumpled tarlatan to brocaded satin beside the passage on Coleridge in the *English Poets*, or the description of Winterslow and its neighbourhood in the "Farewell to Essay-writing," or "On a Landscape of Nicolas Poussin," in the *Table-Talk*. Read these pieces and nothing else, and an excusable impression might be given that the writer was nothing if not florid. But turn over a dozen pages, and the most admirable examples of the grave and chaste manner occur. He is an inveterate quoter, yet few men are more original. No man is his superior in lively, gossiping description, yet he could within his limits reason closely and expound admirably. It is indeed almost always necessary when he condemns anything to inquire very carefully as to the reasons of the condemnation. But nothing that he likes is (except Napoleon) ever bad: everything that he praises will repay the right man who, at the right time, examines it to see for what Hazlitt likes it. I have, for my part, no doubt that Miss Sarah Walker was a very engaging young woman; but (though the witness is the same) I have the gravest doubts as to Hazlitt's charges against her.

We shall find this same curious difference everywhere in Hazlitt. He has been talking, for instance, with keen relish of the "Conversation of Authors" (it is he, be it remembered, who has handed down to us the immortal debate at one of Lamb's Wednesdays on "People one would Like to have Seen"), and saying excellent things about it. Then he changes the key, and tells us that the conversation of "Gentlemen and Men of Fashion" will not do. Perhaps not; but the wicked critic stops and asks himself whether Hazlitt had known much of the conversation of "Gentlemen and Men of Fashion"? We can find no

record of any such experiences of his. In his youth he had no opportunity: in his middle age he was notoriously recalcitrant to all the usages of society, would not dress, and scarcely ever dined out except with a few cronies. This does not seem to be the best qualification for a pronouncement on the question. Yet this same essay is full of admirable things, the most admirable being, perhaps, the description of the man who "had you at an advantage by never understanding you." I find, indeed, in looking through my copies of his books, re-read for the purpose of this paper, an innumerable and bewildering multitude of essays, of passages and short phrases, marked for reference. In the seven volumes above referred to (to which, as has been said, not a little has to be added) there must be hundreds of separate articles and conversations; not counting as separate the short maxims and thoughts of the *Characteristics*, and one or two other similar collections, in which, indeed, several passages are duplicated from the *Essays*. At least two out of every three are characteristic of Hazlitt: not one in any twenty is not well worth reading and, if occasion served, commenting on. They are, indeed, as far from being consecutive as (according to the Yankee) was the conversation of Edgar Poe; and the multitude and diversity of their subjects fit them better for occasional than for continuous reading. Perhaps, if any single volume deserves to be recommended to a beginner in Hazlitt it had better be *The Plain Speaker*, where there is the greatest range of subject, and where the author is seen in an almost complete repertory of his numerous parts. But there is not much to choose between it and *The Round Table* (where, however, the papers are shorter as a rule), *Table-Talk*, and the volume called, though not by the author, *Sketches and Essays*. I myself care considerably less for the *Conversations with Northcote*, the personal element in which has often attracted readers; and the attempts referred to



above as *Characteristics*, avowedly in the manner of La Rochefoucauld, are sometimes merely extracts from the essays, and rarely have the self-containedness, the exact and chiselled proportion, which distinguishes the true "thought" as La Rochefoucauld and some other Frenchmen, and as Hobbes perhaps alone of Englishmen, wrote it. But to criticise these numerous papers is like sifting a cluster of motes, and the mere enumeration of their titles would fill up more than half the room which I have to spare. They must be criticised or characterised in two groups only, the strictly critical and the miscellaneous, the latter excluding politics; and as for art, I do not pretend to be more than a connoisseur according to Blake's definition, that is to say, one who refuses to let himself be connoissured out of his senses. I shall only, in reference to this last subject observe that the singularly germinal character of Hazlitt's work is noticeable here also; for no one who reads the essay on Nicolas Poussin will fail to add Mr. Ruskin to Hazlitt's fair herd of literary children.

His criticism is scattered through all the volumes of general essays; but is found by itself in the series of lectures, or essays (they are rather the latter than the former), on the characters of Shakespeare, on Elizabethan Literature, on the English Poets, and on the English Comic Writers. I cannot myself help thinking that in these four Hazlitt is at his best; though there may be nothing so attractive to the general, and few such brilliant passages as may be found in the "Farewell to Essay Writing," in the paper on Poussin, in the "Going to a Fight," in the "Going a Journey," and others of the same class. The reason of the preference is by no means a greater interest in the subject of one class than in the subject of another. It is that, from the very nature of the case, Hazlitt's unlucky prejudices interfere much more seldom with his literary work. They interfere sometimes, as in the case of Sidney, as

in some remarks about Coleridge and Wordsworth, and elsewhere; but these instances are rare indeed compared with those that occur in the other division. On the other hand, Hazlitt's enthusiastic appreciation of what is good in letters, his combination of gusto with sound theory as to what is excellent in prose and verse, his felicitous method of expression, and the acuteness that kept him from that excessive and paradoxical admiration which both Lamb and Coleridge affected, and which has gained many more pupils than his own moderation, are always present. Nothing better has ever been written than his general view of the subject as an introduction to his Lectures on Elizabethan Literature; and almost all the faults to be found with it are due merely to occasional deficiency of information, not to error of judgment. He is a little paradoxical on Jonson; but not many critics could furnish a happier contrast than his enthusiastic praise of certain passages of Beaumont and Fletcher, and his cool toning down of Lamb's extravagant eulogy on Ford. He is a little unfair to the Caroline poets; but here the great disturbing influence comes in. If his comparison of ancient and modern literature is rather weak, that is because Hazlitt was anything but widely acquainted with either; and, indeed, it may be said in general that wherever he goes wrong, it is not because he judges wrongly on known facts, but because he either does not know the facts, or is prevented from seeing them by distractions of prejudice. To go through his Characters of Shakespeare would be impossible, and besides, it is a point of honour for one student of Shakespeare to differ with all others. I can only say that I know no critic with whom on this point I differ so seldom as with Hazlitt. Even better, perhaps, are the two sets of lectures on the Poets and Comic Writers. The generalisations are not always sound, for, as must be constantly repeated, Hazlitt was not widely read in literatures other than his

own, and his standpoint for comparison is therefore rather insufficient. But take him where his information is sufficient and how good he is! Of the famous four treatments of the dramatists of the Restoration — Lamb's, Hazlitt's, Leigh Hunt's and Macaulay's — his seems to me by far the best. In regard to Butler, his critical sense has for once triumphed over his political prejudice; unless some very unkind devil's advocate should suggest that the supposed ingratitude of the King to Butler reconciled Hazlitt to him. He is admirable on Burns; and nothing can be more unjust or sillier than to pretend, as has been pretended, that Burns's loose morality engaged Hazlitt on his side. De Quincey was often a very acute critic, but anything more uncritical than his attack on Hazlitt's comparison of Burns and Wordsworth in relation to passion, it would be difficult to find. Hazlitt "could forgive Swift for being a Tory," he tells us — which is at any rate more than some other people, who have a better reputation for impartiality than his, seem to have been able to do. No one has written better than he on Pope, who still seems to have the faculty of distorting some critical judgments. His chapter on the English novelists (that is to say, those of the last century) is perhaps the best thing ever written on the subject; and is particularly valuable nowadays when there is a certain tendency to undervalue Smollett in order to exalt Fielding, who certainly needs no such illegitimate and uncritical leverage. I do not think that he is on, the whole, unjust to Campbell; though his Gallican, or rather Napoleonic mania made him commit the literary crime of slighting "The Battle of the Baltic." But in truth in criticism of English literature (and he has attempted little else, except by way of digression) he is for the critic a study never to be wearied of, always to be profited by. His very aberrations are often more instructive than other men's right-goings; and if he sometimes fails to detect or

acknowledge a beauty, he never praises a defect.

It is less easy to sum up the merits of the miscellaneous pieces, for the very obvious reason that they can hardly be brought under any general form or illustrated by any small number of typical instances. Perhaps the best way of "sampling" this undisciplined multitude is to select a few papers by name, so as to show the variety of Hazlitt's interests. The one already mentioned, "On Going to a Fight," which shocked some proprieties even in its own day, ranks almost first; but the reader should take care to accompany it with the official record of that celebrated contest between Neate and the Gasman. All fights are good reading; but this particular effort of Hazlitt's makes one sigh for a *Boxiana* or *Pugilistica* edited by him. Next, I think, must be ranked "On Going a Journey," with its fine appreciation of solitary travelling which does not exclude reminiscences of pleasant journeys in company. But these two, with the article on Poussin and the "Farewell to Essay-writing," have been so often mentioned that it may seem as if Hazlitt's store were otherwise poor. Nothing could be farther from the truth. The "Character of Cobbett" is the best thing the writer ever did of the kind, and the best thing that has ever been written on the subject. "Of the Past and the Future" is perhaps the height of the popular metaphysical style — the style from which, as was noted, Hazlitt perhaps never got free as far as philosophising is concerned, but of which he is a master. "On the Indian Jugglers" is a capital example of what may be called improving a text; and it contains some of the most interesting and genial examples of Hazlitt's honest delight in games such as rackets and fives, a delight which (heaven help his critics) was frequently regarded at the time as "low." "On Paradox and Commonplace" is less remarkable for its contribution to the discussion of the subject, than as exhibiting one

of Hazlitt's most curious critical megrims—his dislike of Shelley. I wish I could think that he had any better reason for this than the fact that Shelley was a gentleman by birth and his own contemporary. Most disappointing of all, perhaps, is "On Criticism," which the reader (as his prophetic soul, if he is a sensible reader, has probably warned him beforehand) soon finds to be little but an open or covert diatribe against the contemporary critics whom Hazlitt did not like, or who did not like Hazlitt. The apparently promising "On the Knowledge of Character" chiefly yields the remark that Hazlitt could not have admired Cæsar if he had resembled (in face) the Duke of Wellington. But "My First Acquaintance with Poets" is again a masterpiece; and to me, at least, "Merry England" is perfect. Hazlitt is almost the only person up to his own day who dared to vindicate the claims of nonsense, though he seems to have talked and written as little of it as most men. The chapter "On Editors" is very amusing, though perhaps not entirely in the way in which Hazlitt meant it; but I cannot think him happy "On Footmen," or on "The Conversation of Lords," for reasons already sufficiently stated. A sun-dial is a much more promising subject than a broomstick, yet many essays might be written on sun-dials without there being any fear of Hazlitt's being surpassed. Better still is "On Taste," which, if the twenty or thirty best papers in Hazlitt were collected (and a most charming volume they would make), would rank among the very best. "On Reading New Books" contains excellent sense, but perhaps is, as Hazlitt not seldom is, a little deficient in humour; while the absence of any necessity for humour makes the discussion "Whether Belief is Voluntary" an excellent one. Hazlitt is not wholly of the opinion of that Hebrew Jew who said to M. Renan, "*On fait ce qu'on veut mais on croit ce qu'on peut.*"

The shorter papers of the *Round Table* yield perhaps a little less freely in the way of specially notable examples. They come closer to a certain kind of Addisonian essay, a short lay-sermon, without the charming divagation of the longer articles. To see how nearly Hazlitt can reach the level of a rather older and cleverer George Osborne, turn to the paper here on Classical Education. He is quite orthodox for a wonder: perhaps because opinion was beginning to veer a little to the side of Useful Knowledge; but he is as dry as his own favourite biscuit, and as guiltless of freshness. He is best in this volume where he notes particular points such as Kean's Iago, Milton's versification (here, however, he does not get quite to the heart of the matter), "John Bunce," and "The Excursion." In this last he far out-steps the scanty confines of the earlier papers of the *Round Table*, and allows himself that score of pages which seems to be with so many men the normal limit of a good essay. Of his shortest style one sample from "Trifles light as Air" is so characteristic in more ways than one that it must be quoted whole.

"I am by education and conviction inclined to Republicanism and Puritanism. In America they have both. But I confess I feel a little staggered as to the practical efficacy and saving grace of first principles when I ask myself, Can they throughout the United States from Boston to Baltimore, produce a single head like one of Titian's Venetian Nobles, nurtured in all the pride of aristocracy and all the blindness of popery? Of all the branches of political economy the human face is perhaps the best criterion of value."

If I were editing Hazlitt's works I should put these sentences on the title-page of every volume; for dogmatist as he thought himself, it is certain that he was in reality purely aesthetic, though, I need hardly say, not in the absurd sense, or no-sense, which modern misuse of language has chosen to fix on the word. Therefore he is very good (where few are good at all) on Dreams and, being a great observer of himself, singularly in-

structive on Application to Study. "On Londoners and Country People" is one of his liveliest efforts; and the pique at his own inclusion in the Cockney School fortunately evaporates in some delightful reminiscences, including one of the few classic passages on the great game of marbles. His remarks on the company at the Southampton coffee-house, which have often been much praised, please me less: they are too much like attempts in the manner of the Queen Anne men, and Hazlitt is always best when he imitates nobody. "Hot and Cold" (which might have been more intelligibly called "North and South") is distinctly curious, bringing out again what may be called Hazlitt's fanciful observation; and it may generally be said, that however alarming and however suggestive of commonplace, the titles "On Respectable People," "On People of Sense," "On Novelty and Familiarity" &c., may be, Hazlitt may almost invariably be trusted to produce something that is not commonplace, that is not laboured paradox, that is eminently literature.

I know that a haphazard catalogue of the titles of essays (for it is little more) such as fills the last paragraph or two may not seem very succulent. But within moderate space there is really no other means of indicating the author's extraordinary range of subject, and at the same time the pervading excellence of his treatment. To exemplify a difference which has sometimes been thought to require explanation, his work as regards system, connection with anything else, immediate occasion (which with him was generally what his friend, Mr. Skimpole, would have called "pounds") is always Journalism: in result, it is almost always Literature. Its staple subjects, as far as there can be said to be any staple where the thread is so various, are very much those which the average newspaper-writer since his time has had to deal with—politics, book-reviewing, criticism on plays and pictures, social etceteras, the minor

morals, the miscellaneous incidents of daily life. It is true that Hazlitt was only for a short time in the straitest shafts, the most galling traces, of periodical hack-work. His practice was rather that of George Warrington, who worked till he had filled his purse, and then lay idle till he had emptied it. He used (an indulgence agreeable in the mouth, but bitter in the belly) very frequently to receive money beforehand for work which was not yet done. Although anything but careful, he was never an extravagant man, his tastes being for the most part simple; and he never, even during his first married life, seems to have been burdened by an expensive household. Moreover, he got rid of Mrs. Hazlitt on very easy terms. Still he must constantly have had on him the sensation that he lived by his work, and by that only. It seems to be (as far as one can make it out) this sensation which more than anything else jades and tires what some very metaphorical men of letters are pleased to call their Pegasus. But Hazlitt, though he served in the shafts, shows little trace of the harness. He has frequent small-carelessnesses of style, but he would probably have had as many or more if he had been the easiest and gentlest of easy-writing gentlemen. He never seems to have allowed himself to be cramped in his choice of his subjects, and wrote for the editors of whom he speaks so amusingly with almost as much freedom of speech as if he had had a private press of his own, and had issued dainty little tractates on Dutch paper to be fought for by bibliophiles. His prejudices, his desultoriness, his occasional lack of correctness of fact (he speaks of "Fontaine's Translation" of *Æsop*, and makes use of the extraordinary phrase, "The whole Council of Trent with Father Paul at their head," than which a more curious blunder is hardly conceivable), his wayward inconsistencies, his freaks of bad taste, would in all probability have been aggravated rather than alleviated by the greater freedom and less re-

sponsibility of an independent or an endowed student. The fact is that he was a born man of letters, and that he could not help turning whatsoever he touched into literature, whether it was criticism on books or on pictures, a fight or a supper, a game at marbles, a political diatribe, or the report of a literary conversation. He doubtless had favourite subjects; but I do not know that it can be said that he treated one class of subjects better than another, with the exception that I must hold him to have been first of all a literary critic. He certainly could not write a work of great length; for the faults of his *Life of Napoleon* are grave even when its view of the subject is taken as undisputed, and it holds about the same place (that of longest and worst) which the book it was designed to counterwork holds among Scott's productions. Nor was he, as it seems to me, quite at home in very short papers—in papers of the length of the average newspaper article. What he could do, as hardly any other man has ever done in England, was a *causerie* of about the same length as Sainte-Beuve's or a little shorter, less limited in range, but also less artfully proportioned than the great Frenchman's literary and historical studies, giving scope for considerable digression, but coming to an end before the author was wearied of his subject, or had exhausted the fresh thoughts and the happy borrowings and analogies which he had ready for it. Of what is rather affectedly called "architectonic," Hazlitt has nothing. No essay of his is

ever an exhaustive or even a symmetrical treatment of its nominal, or of any, theme. He somewhere speaks of himself as finding it easy to go on stringing pearls when he has once got the string; but for my part I should say that the string was much more doubtful than the pearls. Except in a very few set pieces, his whole charm consists in the succession of irregular, half-connected but unending and infinitely variegated thoughts, fancies, phrases, quotations, which he pours forth not merely at a particular "Open Sesame," but at "Open barley," "Open rye," or any other grain in the corn-chandler's list. No doubt the charm of these is increased by the fact that they are never quite haphazard, never absolutely promiscuous, despite their desultory arrangement; no doubt also a certain additional interest arises from the constant revelation which they make of Hazlitt's curious personality, his enthusiastic appreciation flecked with spots of grudging spite, his clear intellect clouded with prejudice, his admiration of greatness and nobility of character co-existing with the faculty of doing very mean and even disgraceful things, his abundant relish of life contrasted with almost constant repining. He must have been one of the most uncomfortable of all English men of letters, who can be called great, to know as a friend. He is certainly, to those who know him only as readers, one of the most fruitful both in instruction and in delight.

GEORGE SAINTSBURY.

## PERSIA.

THE usual three courses are open to the traveller visiting Persia. He may cross the Caucasus from Europe, or may go by sea or land from India. For various reasons the sea alone was open to me, and I embarked from Kurrachee in a steamer bound for Bushire.

A weary way it is along the Mekran coast, through the sea of Oman, to Ormuz, snide of a great name, and Bunder Abbas, the port of Shah Abbas the (comparatively) Great. Let one description of a coast village do for all. A background of high, barren, volcanic hills, a level and treeless plain to the sea, a collection of mud houses on the shore redeemed from ugliness by groves of date-palms. A bright sun, in a bright blue sky, blazes down on this oft-repeated picture.

Some miles from the coast steamers anchor at Bushire; and on a windy day the traveller does not land under three hours of weary tacking in a buggalow beneath a bright sun, which soon dries on his face the salt from the waves that break over the boat and, on a rough day, over himself.

Bushire, the largest town in the Gulf, is the headquarters of a Persian Governor. Its fort remains in the ruined condition in which our troops left it in 1856, but the town has increased in size since then. It stands on a low tongue of land projecting into the Gulf, and is surrounded by swampy salt plains, often converted by mirage into lakes of "Devil's water." Despite the dirty, narrow lanes which do duty for streets, the men in long tunics and high lambskin hats, and the women clad in green trousers, yellow top-boots, blue cloth and white veil, there is something not truly Persian about Bushire. The population is too Arab, the connection

with Kurrachee and Bombay too close, and the small English society gives the place the air of an Anglo-Indian station.

Hence to Shiraz you cannot post, but must travel by caravan whether so disposed or not. The ascent from "Hotland" to "Upland" is made over precipitous passes, where posted horses would be of little or no use; so mules or horses must be hired or bought, and little more than two stages a day can be got over.

Winding through defiles and gorges along the stony bed of the Daliki river, a bridge is reached, whence a staircase of rocks leads to a plain, some two thousand feet above the sea-level, where grass is scarce and trees of a colder clime replace the date-groves of Daliki. Next day, another staircase of about one thousand feet lands the traveller in another plain, whence, after the usual ups and downs of this worst of tracks, Kazeroon is reached: a town of nine thousand inhabitants, where a Governor, under the Prince-Governor of Shiraz, resides. Hard by are the ruins of Shahpur, where a rock carving can be seen of King Shapur, with his foot on the neck of the Emperor Valerian, a memorial of a Persian victory over the Romans at Edessa, sixteen hundred years ago.

Around Kazeroon are many beautiful orange gardens, and in one of these, a short time before my visit, occurred a tragedy which will bring home to my readers the state of the criminal law in Persia. Two villagers quarrelled, and one, in the heat of the moment, smote the other on the head with his spade. There was no homicidal intention, but the injured man died. The Koran claims an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth, and the



Koran is the Penal Code as well as the Bible of an orthodox Moslem state; but blood-money may be, and almost always is, accepted as satisfaction by the relations of the deceased. The father of this villager, however, declined to receive money, and insisted on the offender's death. The Governor in doubt referred the case to his superior at Shiraz, who, after the usual references to the Mollahs (or high-priests), replied that the law of God must be carried into effect. This somewhat oracular answer left matters, as was doubtless its intention, still in the discretion of the Governor; and he, to get out of the difficulty, gave his executioners a holiday, and told the father of the deceased that in their absence he could not carry the law into effect. The father replied that this was no obstacle, for he would himself carry out the law. Had he thrice refused treble the legal blood-money, and should his son's murderer go free? After this there was nothing more to be said. The unfortunate homicide, with the fatalism of a Mussulman, sat down beneath an orange-tree and smoked his last pipe, while his enemy brought two farrashes of the Governor to dig his grave. On their arrival, the victim put away his pipe, and sat still while the father of the man he slew in the heat of passion judicially cut his throat.

A horrible story that I would not believe, but that I had it from sources that left no doubt of its truth. In the territories of the other great Mussulman power such an occurrence as this would be impossible. A more reforming and less fanatical spirit has largely modified the criminal law of the Koran in the Ottoman empire; while the civil law, as therein administered, is as complex and procrastinating a system as civilisation can devise.

The path from Kazeroon proceeds through wheat-fields coloured by white and red poppies to a swamp, where it turns to the "Maiden's Pass," another rocky staircase perhaps one thousand

feet high, beyond which is a pretty park-like valley full of oak trees, whence the "Old Woman's Pass," twice as long as the Maiden's and even harder to surmount, leads the traveller past a half-way caravanserai to the highest point he reaches on this great staircase from the level of the Persian Gulf to the level of the Central Asian plateau. To Dasht-i-Arjun, the Plain of Wild Olives, the next of the landing-places, you descend, its height above sea-level not being more than six thousand feet.

Shiraz is a large city set in the midst of gardens in a large plain surrounded by snow-capped mountains. The blue-tiled domes of two mosques, which glisten above the mud-coloured, tree-embosomed mass of buildings below them, enhance the beauty of the view, as does the stony march between it and Dasht-i-Arjun.

I was hospitably entertained here in a pleasure-house built in a garden, wherein grow all the wall-fruits of England, strawberries, and the best of vegetables. The nightingale will sing you to sleep if you leave your window open; but he has not the continuous song of his English brother, and is rather cheaply held. The late Mr. Alison had several trees cut down in front of his house at Teheran, because, he said, the nightingales collected in them and kept him awake all night. And besides listening to the nightingale, you may also, if you will, eat of him cold: that is to say, you may be offered a dish going by that name; but the Shirazis do not imitate the extravagances of the Roman epicure, and their cold nightingale is but an euphemism for ham.

The Prince-Governor is a boy of sixteen, the son of the Zil-es-Sultan; but the real administrator is the Sahib Dewan, a great personage whose father, I think it was, was boiled in oil. I saw him and the Prince, who talked now French and now Persian. When asked if he liked sport, he replied, "Oui, mais je prefere mes études." I had mentioned that I ex-



pected to have audience of his father at Ispahan, where I repeated this speech, as was doubtless expected of me, with the result that the father, with a laugh, said he did not believe it.

The soldiers here are better dressed than those of Bushire; but their appearance is nevertheless suggestive of the lax discipline which allows them to follow any pursuit they please when not undergoing instruction, or engaged in tax-gathering or other expeditions.

The Jews here, as elsewhere in Persia, are very badly treated, socially rather than officially. The Jew and the Armenian make the wine that the Mussulman drinks, and not infrequently come in for the punishment which the remorse, or spasmodic orthodoxy, of the latter prompts him to administer. The Armenian, it may be added, does not disdain the wine he makes. It is an article of faith here that sherry is the wine of Shiraz, not of Xeres as is commonly held; and that it took its name from a colony of Shirazis in Andalusia, after the Mussulman conquest of Spain. How this may be, I do not know, but the wine is indeed fragrant and delicious when well made. Like the monks of the west, the priests of the east are most skilful in its manufacture; but they will not always, and never openly, exercise their skill in this respect.

From Shiraz to Persepolis is forty miles through a desolate country, with few villages and scanty cultivation, chiefly of poppy and wheat. The hills are forbidding and unfriendly: travellers are rarely met; and the encampments of Eliants, or nomad tribes, on the banks of the Bendemeer, (as unlike Moore's poetical stream as anything well can be) are the only cheerful incidents of the march. The tombs of the Persian monarchs and the ruins of Persepolis are on opposite sides of the plain of Merv-dasht. The sepulchres are difficult of access, but, when the broad plain is crossed a grand staircase you can ride

upon leads you to a stately terrace, perhaps a quarter of a mile long, built out into the plain and binding the western spur of the rocky hills. Upon this terrace are the celebrated remains of the palace, the twelve tall fluted columns, the ruins of the hall of Xerxes and of the hall of Darius, and behind on the hill-side the tomb of the latter king. The triumphal processions on the polished black syenite might have been carved yesterday, so entirely have they defied the ravages of time, nor are the cuneiform inscriptions less clear. Assyrian winged bulls and Ferothers (the winged spirits of the old fire-worshippers) are carved again and again in hard black stone and pure white marble. Antiquaries have traced in the mass of ruins the details of the palace and its surroundings; but to me it seemed to consist only of solitary columns and of graven slabs, in themselves of great beauty and eloquent of long-past ages and of the pride and power of their builder, Xerxes, by the grace of Ormazd, the king, the great king, the king of kings, the king of the many-peopled countries, the supporter also of the great world, the son of Darius the Achaemenian.

To others than antiquaries these and similar remains of the past can do little more than excite such trite reflections as need no description. The tomb of Cyrus, for instance, on the plain of Murghab, some two thousand five hundred years old, is marvellously well preserved and probably looks much as it did when Alexander the Great came to pay his respects to departed greatness. The Persians say that Cyrus was taken up to heaven while still living, and that this tomb is that of the mother of Solomon. To me it was more interesting to spend the day with the Elkhaui, or chief of the nomads of Shiraz, who was on his way to Ispahan to visit the all-powerful Zil-es-Sultan.

Darkness came on before I could make the post-house of Murghab, but

in the cold and rainy night, as the Persian groom and I were trying to keep the track, we came suddenly on the watch-fires of an encampment. I asked for the chief's tent, and found him, his son, and his cousin seated on their carpets around a brazier warming their hands. I explained that I was a traveller and wanted shelter. "You are most welcome," said he, and soon dinner was served. Nothing was said during the meal, but an occasional "Welcome," or "Eat something," as the Eelkhani placed a handful of *kabobs* (roast meat) or a pickle of a particularly pretty flavour on my plate, or offered another sherbet cooled with snow. But after dinner we had much conversation on politics and religion, and nowhere in Persia have I seen a more intelligent man than this wandering chief—well educated, Persian-wise, a stickler for state and dignity, and withal a very handsome man.

A tent was pitched for me, and servants ordered to see to my comfort. In the morning the neighbouring tent going down disclosed my host seated on his carpet with his Persian apparatus around him, curling his locks and arranging his clothing for the march, while hard by a tea-pot stood on a *samovar* surrounded by pretty Russian tea-cups, which were often filled and emptied before we started.

I doubt if a true Persian would have entertained a wandering Frank who had no servants and no belongings but what he carried in his saddle-bags. This nomad chief, however, did so, and asked no questions that might not in the circumstances have been put by any well-bred host. I was glad to do him a little service by taking on a letter to the Governor of Bushire, also on his way to visit the Zil-es-Sultan, who was three marches on ahead. This gentleman invited me to travel with him, offering a dozen servants, horses at discretion, and what not. I accepted his offer on the morrow, and formed one of a huge procession of armed men riding before and behind

and on every side of the Governor, who now and then left me to pinch a small black slave, one of four destined to be presented to the Zil-es-Sultan at Ispahan. One of these was called the Cat, and mewed whenever the Governor pinched him. All were treated with the kindness invariably shown to slaves, and all possessed some accomplishment analagous to that of the Cat. They alone reclined in panniers instead of riding as others did.

It is very tedious to do twenty miles at a walk in this fashion; worse when the march is over to find that your host does not take breakfast, and only eats at night, taking tea twice, however, in the course of the day. Not before nine in the evening was dinner served on the usual round sheet of leather. Sitting on the ground opposite my host, by whose side sat his secretary, I saw a long spit appear over my shoulder. At the end of it was a partridge, which the Governor seized, pulled off, and deposited on my plate. "It is very good," said I, tearing off a leg, and handing it to him. "Excellent!" said he. "Who cooked it?" and as a courtly bow from one of the individuals at the door indicated the fortunate possessor of his approval, he told the secretary to make a note of the very praiseworthy performance.

A hideous ride hence brings the traveller to Dihbeed, a lonely little hamlet seven thousand feet above the sea-level, where good sport might be obtained by any one who could endure the painful solitude and desolation of the country round. Wild asses and leopards can be got at, and small game abounds. In posting through the country a groom always takes your horse back to the post-house where you got it. He, too, is mounted, so you always have some company, that is if you can talk Persian. Near Persepolis, a very tuneful groom accompanied me, singing odes of Hafiz in a voice to waken the dead. Some information may be picked up from

such men as to the state of the country, but 'tis off the beaten track that most may be learnt.

From Dihbeed, the path winds through rocky hills and barren plains to Abadeh, a small town with some cultivation and gardens about it, noted for its sherbet-spoons of pear-wood, which are wonderfully thin and beautifully carved. Sherbet, by the way, is placed on the leather floor-cloth in bowls, and in each bowl is one of these spoons, which every person at the table uses in turn as he feels inclined. A European in the houses of the great can generally get a silver cup, and can dissolve his little pyramid of snow in his own particular drink, the Persians marvelling the while at his exclusive habits. I cannot, however, agree with worthy Friar Jordanus (in his *Marvels of the East*) that the Persians are filthy feeders. He contrasts them with the Hindus of the Malabar Coast, an extraordinarily cleanly race. A Nair's house is the very pearl of cleanliness; but this high standard makes the good Bishop unjust to those who fall short of it, and he argues like the Hindu in Pandurang Hari, who thought that as Mussulmans are so filthy as to eat *kabobs* it did not matter whether they were made of sheep's or of dog's flesh.

Abadeh was, and is, a great centre of the Secretaries of Bab, the heads of large numbers of whom are buried in a ditch there. A predecessor of my host, the Eelkhani, had been sent during the Babee persecution to Niris to put down the insurgents, and he started back for Teheran with baskets full of heads. Many of these, however, corrupted on the way, and were accordingly buried here. The fate of the Babees was that of most new religions. A sect of reformers who desired to march with the times and to assimilate in some respects the tenets of Islam to those of Christianity, they were accused of being political conspirators and dangerous demagogues, of professing the most immoral and communistic doctrines.

Thousands died with great constancy and unshaken courage about thirty years ago, after experiencing in their deaths, as they had in their lives, much the same fate as the early Christians. They were shod like horses, flayed alive, boiled in oil, and converted into living lamps, holding in slits in their tortured bodies flaming torches:

"Stantes ardent et fixo gutture fumant."

From Abadeh over an interminable plain, where there is nothing to catch the eye but the distant hills, your road goes to Ispahan. The first view of this ancient and royal city from the hill of the Imamzadahs is very striking. Large houses, proved on a nearer view to be for the most part ruins: avenues of plane-trees and the shady little lanes of Julfa, make up the view on the south side of the Zindarood, or Living River; while to the north of it lie the bazaars and ruins which form the city. All around are fields of opium, gardens, and pigeon-towers as far as the eye reaches over the vast plain.

The city boasts a fine square, where the Zil-es-Sultan (literally, the Shadow of the King), the Prince-Governor is eternally drilling recruits or inspecting regiments. The Zil-es-Sultan is the eldest son of the Shah, whom he much resembles in face, figure, and manner, being proud, yet possessed of much *bonhomie*, prejudiced, yet glad to learn, a sportsman or a voluptuary as the passion of the day dictates, and, though a thorough Persian, an able Governor. The extract in the note from a pamphlet I have written on an unexplored portion of the country, will give a fair idea of the character and manner of the Prince,<sup>1</sup> and it is in

<sup>1</sup> Scene: the Palace Garden at Ispahan. *Dramatis persone*—the Prince, a general, a crowd of officers, courtiers, a guard of soldiers, myself. "Was I in the army?" "No." "A pity." Aside to the others, but in the same tone, "A good youth." Hereon I tried to look my best. "What was I travelling for?" "To learn Persian, and see the country." Aside, "Just like these English-

connection with him that a few words can best be spoken on the Persian army. Opinions differ as to its size and efficiency, but the following figures may be accepted as a fair estimate :

Infantry .....	37,000
Cavalry .....	13,000*
Artillery .....	3,000
Total.....	53,000

\* Including irregular horse of all sorts and conditions, and mounted police.

The Cavalry retains many of the good qualities of the old Persian irregular horse : the Infantry is possessed of great endurance, and is mobile to a degree only possible in an army in which every private soldier keeps an ass for the transport of his own effects. The regiments are territorial, and the State pay of the soldier is subsidised by a contribution from his village. Drill and military instruction generally are afforded at large stations only, and by professional instructors. The regimental officers are remarkable for their abysmal ignorance of anything appertaining to military affairs. The pay of the officer is small, but that of the soldier, if actually disbursed, compares favourably with that of the labourers and agriculturists of the country. The Infantry regiments are not yet armed throughout with breech-loaders. Could the army be handled by one master mind, it undoubtedly possesses many qualities that would make it a factor of some importance in the politics of Central Asia. Enough of this subject, however, for long marches yet remain between the Crown of Islam and the Footstool of Royalty, or, in plain English, between Ispahan and the capital.

The intervening country is much the same as that already described, the scenery and the people similar ; except that north of Ispahan, every man you meet does not look like a well-armed

brigand, while south of it every man does.

I arrived at Teheran in the afternoon, and would here remark that one hundred miles a day is pretty fair posting in Persia. At the gate a soldier asks your name and business, "for the information of the Shah," he says, but really to satisfy his own curiosity. Nothing in the environs betokens the approach to a great city. Its situation alone is good : at the foot of the grand range of the Elburz, with Damavend looking coldly over it from the east. Within the walls is nothing beautiful or pleasant, but the British Legation and the kindly welcomes experienced there and elsewhere at the hands of the small European community. On the slopes of Shamroon of the Elburz are the villages where the summer residences of the representatives of foreign powers lie hidden in shady gardens of fruit trees and in thickets of planes and elms.

Teheran, as a Persian city, is one of the least interesting of its kind. Of what the Persians have borrowed from Europe, their police, organised by the Count de Monteforte, is the best managed. Horse-racing is carried on in a style that astonishes an Englishman. The course is hard and covered with stones : races extend to ten miles in length : the Shah's horses must win, and to this end pulling, peppering the eyes, or frightening off the course, are considered fair expedients ; or, if considered unfair, are none the less resorted to.

Society in the capital is peculiarly polyglot. At a dinner-party it is an ordinary occurrence to hear seven or eight languages, not one of which is English, all spoken at the same time. Persian is much spoken by Europeans : French to a certain extent by the Persians about the Court, and Turkish at the Palace.

From Bushire we have now reached Teheran, after riding eight hundred and forty-six miles, and the country passed through cannot be called altogether beautiful. Yet the people are

men." To me, "Why do they want to know so much? Here no one knows anything : it is better so : I know nothing, but I can govern provinces."

invariably well fed, and fairly well dressed, and apparently by no means universally oppressed or overtaxed. It is the scarcity of villages that strikes one more unfavourably than the condition of the villages when reached.

The Europeans who live in the country do not often travel off the beaten track. Among the hospitable body of telegraph-clerks, to which every traveller in the country owes so much, are men of great intelligence, but the nature of their duty confines them to the village in which their testing-station is situated. One of these officers asking me what I did for food when riding post without a servant, I told him, dates or cucumbers with *maust* (sour milk) was my standby. "Ah!" said he, "that is all very well for a traveller like you; but if I was to eat *maust* and dates my servants would whisper it in the bazaar, it would get about among the Persians, and my prestige would suffer; the prestige of the Department would be lowered, and the prestige of the English in the East affected." *Maust* and dates form the staple food of the peasantry in Arabia and parts of Persia: it is a cooling, nourishing, and pleasant compound.

Ninety-eight miles from Teheran is Kasveen, and between Kasveen and Hamadan lies the Karaghan range with little plains between, inhabited, the hills by Turki nomad tribes, and the plains by Turkis and Persians. Across the hills by the route I took no European had travelled: indeed no narrative of the little-used caravan track has ever been published, though a European botanist once went that way. I was anxious to take a tract blank—or more or less blank—in Kiepert's latest map, and to see whether it bore out my theory, that the part of the country most travelled over and described is far inferior in population and fertility to many of its unknown regions. A little exploration of one hundred and fifty miles gives all the experiences of a longer one; and many such might

be made in Persia, in which country there are at present extensive tracts and districts of which the size, capacity, and even position are but vaguely known at the seat of Government. By wandering slowly across one of these, with a note-book and the materials for the roughest of surveys, a certain amount of business may be combined with a considerable amount of amusement. Posting across the beaten track, where the Farangi is well known, one learns little, and indeed sees the least interesting of the inhabitants of the country. As a friendless and officially unprotected wanderer among the nomad tribes, and in the hill-villages, you are accepted as a curious visitor from another world, and treated sometimes with kindness and sometimes with passive unkindness, but always as the hearts, and not as the fears or interests of your entertainers dictate.

Across one hundred and fifty miles of such country I wandered at leisure: staying at any village where the society, the garden, or the scenery was most pleasant, and, thanks to a knowledge of the language, I got into no trouble that I could not get out of. This route has been already described by me in a small pamphlet published by the Madras Government in 1885; and it will suffice here to say that the fertile plain of Kasveen is dotted everywhere with villages, between which lie fields of wheat and pulses, and around which crowd vineyards, orchards, and gardens, to the Karaghan hills. These for the most part are barren and stony, but relieved by frequent villages, less sparsely populated than might be supposed by Persian Turks, a hardy and manly race, who are truthful and hospitable, and whose women need no veil and no seclusion for the preservation of their own and of their husbands' honour. Food was good in kind, cheap in price, and plentiful to an extraordinary degree. Wages varied from ninepence to a shilling a day: the villagers were well clad, and apparently contented

with themselves and their lot. Sometimes a village Khan would ask about the relations of the English and the Russ, now and then a traveller was met—a *seyyad*, for instance, collecting fleeces (suggestive word), or their value by way of tithes from the faithful; and once a wounded muleteer, shot down by a gang of raiding Kurds the day before. Sometimes a hospitable welcome, sometimes a bed upon the road, or in a stable: rarely roast kid, and generally bread, curds, and cucumbers: everywhere vermin in legions: such were the chief incidents of the road.

Here, as in all unexplored countries, the wandering white man is assumed to be an expert in "the science," that is to say, in medicine. Here, as elsewhere, pleasant and unpleasant experiences succeed one another, and a love of novelty and adventure changes from time to time to a longing for clean clothes, good food, and the comforts of that civilisation which a traveller gladly leaves, and to which he gladly returns.

The houses of the people on hill and plain alike are of the usual flat-roofed, mud-built character. A few cooking utensils, brass trays, often neatly engraved, skins for the manufacture and storing of curds, a rough carpet, and a primitive loom, make up the furniture of the ordinary peasant's home. Add to this a sheet of leather from which to eat, a yard, a *balakhana* or upper story, and better carpets, and you have the contents of the house of the squireen, yeoman, or village Khan. To the poor, huge flaps of unleavened bread are at once a floor (table) cloth, and a portion of the feast. The table cloth gets smaller as you go on picking off pieces and dipping them in the dish of curdled milk.

At Hamadan are the tombs of Queen Esther, of Mordecai, and of Avicenna (Ali ben Sehna), an ancient lion carved in stone, and a treasure-inscription in rock on the hillside of Elwand, a mountain stream which tumbles

through the town under bridges and over tiny cataracts, passing on its way narrow streets, well filled bazaars, and here and there a patch of green turf, whereon the little Persians play much as do little English boys upon the village green. Reading the Book of Esther in the house of an Armenian carpenter with whom I stayed, the scenes of the Bible seemed to be reproduced in my surroundings with extraordinary fidelity; and much do the Jews of Hamadan of to-day stand in need of an intercessor like Queen Esther, though their lives, and for the most part their property, is safe. Next day the scribe of the Governor wrote an order and sealed it with the Governor's ring, that posts on horseback, such as took the letters of Ahasuerus the king, should be provided for me on my journey through Kurdistan; and with regret I turned my back on Hamadan and rode across hill and plain towards the scorching Babylonian low country, from the upland of the Medes to the lowland of the Assyrians.

Along the route were Asadabad, a village of "slain fathers," celebrated for a general and unending vendetta: Kangawar, where is an old temple of the sun: Besitoon, where are the sculptures of Darius Hystaspes carved in the rocky side of a towering precipitous hill, and deciphered by the courage and skill of Sir Henry Rawlinson: the beautiful plain of Minderabad, a huge pasture land covered with lollyhocks, and grazed over by innumerable cattle, sheep, and horses; and Kermanshah, a large town, where the British Government is represented by an agent to the Minister at Teheran, Haji Ahsan Agha, the son of a rich merchant of Baghdad, who is hospitable, kind, and constant in well-doing. The rock carvings at Koh-i-Rustam, near Kermanshah, are the finest in Persia. In a cave, whence flow gushing streams, is carved on the rock a hunting scene, the death of the wild boar. The ladies of the court from



boats watch their lords as they spear the pig, and the whole scene is of the most spirited description.

Hence to the Turkish frontier is little of interest except Kasr-i-Sheereen, erewhile the favourite resort of the beautiful Sheereen, daughter of the Emperor Maurice and wife of Khosroo, grandson of Nousherawan, the lady who preferred the sculptor Ferhad to the king, her husband. Here now dwells a robber chief of great repute, Jawan Meer Khan, who for a subsidy from the Persian Government, that elsewhere would be called black mail, sees that no one else robs the traveller, and passes him on across the Zagros mountains to Khanakeen, the first Turkish town. This remote frontier has been the scene of long desultory fights and boundary disputes between the Persians and the Turks. In these Jawan Meer Khan has played a considerable part, now siding with one party, now with another, and getting arms and money in turns from both. He lives in the mountain fastnesses with his band of two hundred well-armed, well-mounted Kurds, and looks forward to more stirring times and a more congenial occupation than the occasional plunder of a caravan.

The inhabitants of Kurdistan, described in 1880, by a well-known writer, as the most blood-thirsty people under the sun, the Montenegrins alone excepted, appear to me to compare favourably in other respects with the Persians proper. They are brave and hospitable. Prostrated with sun and fever in a Kurdish tent, I have been fanned all day by women and children, and so saved from the torture of the enormous flies of the country. The girls are handsome in a bold bright fashion; but an old Kurdish woman is an ideal witch.

The horses of the country are much prized. They are high couraged and indefatigable, smaller than the Persian horse sold in Bombay, which is, as a rule, an inhabitant of Arabistan, or south eastern Persia.

Along the stony track are graveyards, tombs so placed that pilgrims to Kerbela and Mecca may bless the occupants: flat recumbent slabs with Persian earrings, combs, and rosaries carved upon them, and upright stones exhibiting the figures of spearmen mounted on spirited horses, telling that bold Kurds lie below. Good sleep have they who rest beneath these stones, unlike their brethren lately or long since dead, whose bodies or whose bones pass by slung on mules on the way to Kerbela or Nejeef for burial.

Perhaps it is not generally known that every province in Persia has its agent at these holy shrines, to whom corpses are consigned through muleteers just like ordinary goods. Riding along late one night, overcome with the sun and fatigue of the day, I fell in with a caravan of corpses and exhumed human bones, and was too weary to ride immediately away from it, notwithstanding the dreadful odours from the swathed bundles hung on each side of the mules, some of which contained the bones of persons dead long years ago which had awaited the necessary funds or the necessary opportunity for transport to their last resting-place. The muleteers laughed when I asked whose were these bones and bodies. "How should we know?" said they. "The tickets will show the agent whose they are." Little were they affected by the gruesome proximity of the remains of men who, erewhile like themselves,

"Ate, drank, laughed, loved and lived and liked life well."

Living loads of women and children had jogged along from Mazenderan, five hundred miles away, cheek by jowl with these silent neighbours, not from respect as relations, but for the company and protection of the caravan. Rightly enough are the Turks strict about their quarantine on the Persian frontier, albeit that elsewhere in the Ottoman empire these sanitary precautions are kept up more because



they afford a considerable and easily collected revenue, than because they are necessary to the public weal. It is a pity that the Chinese system of storing corpses prior to their removal to their last resting-place is not adopted. Nothing can be more decent or more sanitary than the cities of the dead in a Chinese town, and nothing worse than the Persian system of disinterment.

At all these Turkish towns the maximum of politeness and the minimum of assistance was met with. The Mudir of Sharaban, however, administered the stick with his own hands to a man of the town who promised two horses and brought two mules for me. The Mudir and I spent the day lying on cushions under a shed on the banks of an irrigation-channel. I was too ill to get about the town myself, and the Mudir too worn out with fasting through the long hot day of Ramazan to trouble himself. But being interrupted in his dinner by a report from the trooper who had been sent to get horses for me, he gravely got up, called for his stick, and while the trooper held the hands of the offender who produced the mules, he himself gave him half a dozen smart blows on the back, then invited me to join his dinner, and said, "Please God, if you lose to-day, you can go to-morrow:" adding with Eastern hyperbole, "I am much interested in your progress. You have seen I killed the offender with my own hands."

Little Arab boys who were catching minnows and gudgeons in the channel we lay beside were occasionally told off to shampoo the Mudir's legs, and to fan the flies off him. The miseries of a Ramazan in the hottest weather in one of the hottest places in the world, can be more readily imagined than described. The heat was so intolerable that it was an effort to eat once a day.

The towns between this and Bagdad were like habitations of the dead, the streets deserted and the people all sleep-

ing through the cruel long days of Ramazan. At night, dinner, narghiles, chiboukes and coffee over, business began and went on till near daybreak. There was none of the bribery necessary in Persia, but there was absolute indifference as to whether the stranger lived or died, stayed or went. He was simply handed over to be fleeced to the owners of horseflesh. In Bagdad, too, which at length was reached after a ride of fifteen hundred miles, it was obvious that the English were far from being the most favoured nation.

The City of the Califs, even in its decay, is one of the least disappointing of the many places with which early associations have made us familiar. The narrow zig-zag streets, where the sun hardly penetrates, the frequent date trees, the flow of the Tigris through the city's length, the bridge of boats, the covered bazaars, along which sleek Moolahs and veiled ladies ride on white donkeys, and turbaned merchants and cloaked Bedaweens on Arab steeds: the brawny porters, staggering under loads that occupy the whole street: Turks, Kurds, Persians, Chaldeans, Armenians, Jews, women in coloured cloaks that conceal their faces and their nationalities at once—all make up a gay and attractive picture, recalling a scene from the *Arabian Nights* at every turn. The ladies of Bagdad have, too, a reputation for beauty by no means undeserved.

In Bagdad, and in Turkey generally, the development of private rights struck me as extraordinary, and much opposed to what is generally believed of the internal state of the empire. So far from dreading the Wali, or Governor-General, instances came to my knowledge in which friendless individuals resisted the most moderate exercise of his authority. On the smallest provocation will the smallest person telegraph to Constantinople, and not without receiving a hearing there. Indeed it is not improbable that any given petition may reach the

hands of the Sultan himself, by repute the most indefatigable of workers. It is a curious fact that His Majesty has for years been buying estates in the Pashalik of Bagdad. Whether he looks forward to a day when the Sovereigns of Europe may receive a circular to say that the Sultan of Room will no longer carry on in that style, but will be known henceforth as Calif of Bagdad, I know not, but a precedent would not be wanting. Certain it is that the Calif of to-day and his ministers much value the city of the Califs of aforetime; and it is, I should think, far from improbable that Bagdad may play in the future of Islam the part assigned to it by that friend and student of Islam, Mr. Wilfrid Blunt.

In conclusion, I would say that Persia, though much mis-governed, seems to me far from *in extremis*, as M. Chirol holds.<sup>1</sup> The peasantry are well fed and well clothed, and I doubt if they desire to change their lot, no mean test of happiness. Office may be bought. It is; but if a Governor exceed the usual profits of his office, the people are prompt enough to complain, and the Shah is glad enough to appoint another, who pays to the royal purse as much as, or more than, his predecessor. Changes in the Government are frequent, almost as frequent as in England, let us say. Sometimes, on the other hand, a good officer retains his charge for a long period. Thus does custom, which tolerates mis-government, modify and minimise its evils.

The poor are by no means universally oppressed, nor are the rich so much plundered as is supposed. If a Governor makes a very enormous purse in office, the Shah will perhaps claim a share in what was wrung from the people by taxation he did not authorise; but merchants are never plundered, nor are officials, of hereditary property. There is a kind of justice in taking from a Governor a part of what he took from the governed. Un-

happily none of the money thus recovered is ever spent on roads or bridges—the great wants of the country; nor are any efforts being made to open up the Karoon trade-route, which would do more to improve Persia than any other single measure that could be devised.

Of freedom of speech and of appeal there is enough. Cruelty on the part of a Governor would surely be punished, and even the Shah and the princes are now more or less influenced by the European press, and very greatly by the Diplomats at Teheran. The pictures of the writer in the *St. James's Gazette* of last year are admitted throughout Persia to have been as overdrawn as the strictness of M. Chirol were unduly severe.

If the influence of Russia is greatest in the north, the north-east, and north-west of Persia, what more natural?—she is the greatest neighbour. On the south and the south-west the influence of England for the same reason preponderates. Those who think English interests neglected in the country are surely mistaken. In small individual cases the English representatives are loth to interfere; but when a telegraph-convention is to be made or renewed, or any interest of importance to be protected, they intervene and carry their point. This seems true diplomacy, and its fruits are none the less real because they are not always apparent.

Of the army I have already spoken. It is far from a great factor in the politics of Central Asia, but it is not entirely a cipher.

The Royal family is by no means disliked throughout the country. The present Shah is, I think, for the most part spoken of with affection by his people; and not undeservedly, for he has curtailed the powers of Governors, introduced the postal and telegraphic systems, and given the greater part of the kingdom to the ablest of his sons to govern. The use of a familiar name is generally a proof of popularity, and it may be that the Shah is none the

<sup>1</sup> *The Fortnightly Review*, January, 1885.

less liked by his subjects when they call him, as they mostly do, plain Nasr-ud-din.

I do not believe the population is decreasing, and that polygamy is in part the cause. Polygamy is the exception in practice, and the population is, I think, underestimated. Less than five years ago it was supposed to be five millions, now it is supposed to be more than seven millions and a half. But in 1856, Mr. Binning estimated it at eight millions. I believe his estimate to be nearest the mark, but still too low. The losses in the famine of 1870 have been made up; and many tracts blank in the map may be as thickly populated as that between Kazveen and Hamadan which I have described in the pamphlet above referred to.

The extension of the cultivation of the poppy in the south will doubtless enrich the country, if the cultivation of corn be not at the same time diminished, as it should not be, at any rate until communications are improved.

The administration of justice is faulty and rough, but ready. Jurisdictions are ill defined. Seeing a boy bastinadoed by the order of a Prince for insulting a woman in the street, I asked why the Governor had not disposed of this matter. It was then explained that the woman was a merchant's daughter, and the Prince was subordinate to the Minister of Commerce; but the truth was, that the Prince was as lenient as the Governor was severe. A choice of jurisdictions is not unpopular. It is not generally

true that punishments are vindictive or disproportionate to the offence. Could the country be polled, I expect the existing system would be preferred to a Penal Code, with its, to an Asiatic, unrelenting and cruelly long sentences, and its judicial anger, which takes no account of the setting of many suns. How unpopular, for instance, are European law and justice in the Ottoman empire.

It is not, as is said, true that the followers of Bab are no more. They increase and multiply in secret after the fashion of persecuted religions. They are not Nihilists or Communists or Atheists, as all men say of them. They reject the doctrine of circumcision, plurality of wives, and facile divorce. They allow one wife, and divorce her on much the same terms as we do, and they hold circumcision to be mere mutilation. In fact they would reform Islam from within, and so meet the wave of destruction that is passing over the Mussulman kingdoms that yet remain. In every city of Persia, among the rich and educated, Babees abound who will one day make their voices heard. Their Christianlike tenets and patient endurance are as admirable as the follies of Sufeeism are the reverse, and their gentleness contrasts with the fierceness of the Wahabee reformers. Yet is the old Islam strong in the land, strong in the cities, stronger in the villages, and strong too among the nomads, purely conventional though their profession of it be.

J. D. REES.

# "LADY CLANCARTY," AND THE HISTORICAL DRAMA.

*Lady Clancarty* was played for the first time just thirteen years ago on a wild night in March—much like the night in which "Captain Heseltine" made his unceremonious entry into my Lord Sunderland's house. It was not very cordially welcomed in *The Times*. Nothing was positively said against it, but something was hinted: it was damned, in short, with very faint praise. It was allowed to be a good romantic sort of play enough, with some fine scenes, and well played—as it certainly was, very well played. But it was said also to have many serious defects, though, as a fact, the objection spent itself in a general complaint that it was too historical. In his anxiety to do homage to history the author had overlooked the necessities of the theatre. He had introduced a number of personages bearing indeed names that could be found in the annals of the time, but of no importance for their own sakes, irrelevant to the action of the piece, and so inevitably lessening its real interest, which was centred in the fortunes of husband and wife, so long parted to meet in such a tragical manner. He should have thought more of the play and less of the history.

Oxenford does not seem to have cared much for Taylor's work; and it has been said that there were good reasons, as those reasons go, for his indifference. At any rate his objections are not very easy to understand. It is indeed quite possible for a play to be too historical as it is possible for a novel to be too historical. *Notre Dame*, for instance, for all its stirring episodes and the pity of poor Esmeralda's story, is too historical. *The Last Days of Pompeii* is too historical. But they do not both go wrong in the same way. The French

novel contains long lumbering archaeological passages, extremely learned and correct, no doubt, but, like the passages in Gray's old house, leading nowhere, and plainly written to show the writer's knowledge of his country's antiquities. The English novel is much more artfully composed, though the best scenes are leagues behind the best scenes of Hugo's. But the strain to be antique, to be historical, is too obvious. All is at high pressure: human nature is crushed between the pages of the classical dictionary: there is as much of it, and as little of it, in the *Charicles* and the *Gallus* of the learned German. Macaulay once spent a winter's day at Naples over this novel, when the cold was too severe for a traveller to face after the Indian suns, and in his diary he made some shrewd remarks, as was his wont, on it, and on historical novels generally. He owned its cleverness and its learning (though of course he picked a few holes in that); but it failed, he said, as all works must fail which aim at a picture of ancient manners. No learning will help a man to that. By his imagination he may create a world unlike our own, but the chances are a thousand to one it will be not the world which has passed away. All attempts to exhibit Romans talking slang and jesting with each other can at their best be but clever failures. Perhaps, he concluded, "those act most wisely who, in treating poetically of ancient events, stick to general human nature, avoid gross blunders of costume, and trouble themselves about little more."

To keep clear of gross blunders and close to human nature is a good recipe for making historical novels. It was the one Scott used. His diary, too, furnishes some remarks on this head which are worth recalling. During

his journey to London in the autumn of 1826 he had been reading *Sir John Cliverton* and *Brambletye House*, works much admired in their day and probably never read since. Of course he knew well enough that they were shoots of his tree, and amused himself by setting down the points of difference as he modestly conceived them to be, and as in fact, with some not unimportant additions, they were.

"I take up again my remarks on imitators. I am sure I mean the gentlemen no wrong by calling them so, and heartily wish they had followed a better model. But it serves to show me *veluti in speculo* my own errors, or, if you will, those of the *style*. One advantage I think I still have over all of them. They may do their fooling with better grace: but I, like Sir Andrew Aguecheek, do it more natural. They have to read old books, and consult antiquarian collections to get their knowledge; I write because I have long since read such works, and possess, thanks to a strong memory, the information which they have to seek for. This leads to a dragging-in historical details by head and shoulders, so that the interest in the main piece is lost in minute descriptions of events which do not affect its progress. Perhaps I have sinned in this way myself: indeed, I am but too conscious of having considered the plot only as what Bayes calls the means of bringing in fine things. . . . All this I may have done, but I have repented of it; and in my better efforts, while I conducted my story through the agency of historical personages, and by connecting it with historical incidents, I have endeavoured to weave them pretty closely together, and in future I will study this more. Must not let the background eclipse the principal figures—the frame overpower the picture."

The future held but six more years for the great magician, years of unending toil and trouble and sickness; yet they produced *The Fair Maid of Perth*.

The same recipe will serve too for the historical dramatist. But he has in some ways an easier business than the novelist. The latter has, for instance, to do his own scene-painting, tailoring, furnishing: the former gets all this done for him. However deftly he work, the novelist must keep us waiting while he sets his scene. Castle-keep or crowded street, lists of battle

or lady's bower, stern mountain-pass or sunny forest-glade: these have all to be described with such circumstance as may help us to realise them; and so too must the fashion of his heroine's dress and the beauty of her face—though in this last matter the novelist, unhampered by earthly fetters, has not always the worst of it. In the theatre all these details are arranged before the action begins; and there is the play-bill to tell us who everybody is and to map out our travels for us. The great (or, as some would sooner call them, the rude) forefathers of the English drama had not all these advantages. There were certainly play-bills in Charles the Second's day; but it may be this was one of those little matters that even great Elizabeth's time was not spacious enough to embrace. As for scenery, the courtly masques were very elaborately and splendidly furnished; but the general scene was, as every one knows, a very undressed thing, with its topography indicated by a bare name painted on a cloth. That Shakespeare felt this difficulty is clear from a famous prologue, wherein he apologises for the strain on the imagination necessary to make his audience realise that they are looking on the plain of Agincourt and a battle of heroes. His descendants have an easier time. It is at any rate not their fault if we do not know at what and whom we are looking. Their danger lies rather from a plethora than a paucity of decoration, rather from a pedantic attention to details than a noble disregard of them. And even then the fault lies not so much with the author as with the manager; or, as the manager will tell you, with the public, which insists upon these scenic details—perhaps because its imagination is less capable of strain than was the imagination of its ancestors.

But there is another way in which the dramatist may go wrong. Like the novelist, he may elaborate his frame till he spoils his picture. He may drag in historical details by the

head and shoulders, as Scott said, but they will be human heads and shoulders. He may crowd his story with too many characters and too many incidents. Incidents and characters may be relevant to each other and to the time, but they may also dwarf the central interest and generally cumber the action. Thus we get a series of shifting scenes, each one possibly striking in itself but beginning and ending its own significance, with no real sequence. The result will be a panorama, not a play.

This is the fault Oxenford found with *Lady Clancarty*. But did he find it reasonably? We have seen what advantages the writer of plays has over the writer of novels: let us now look at the other side. The novelist is hampered by no restrictions of time or place. He may explore all the past to make the present clear. He may, like a fashionable modern critic, give you the history of a whole family, or even of a whole people, to explain his hero's environment and its consequences. He may transport you to one hemisphere to make you understand what is to happen in another. He may employ a hundred devices first to entangle and then to unravel a situation or a character. He may call upon a hundred voices to speak for him, and keep his own always ready for chorus. But with the dramatist it is different. In the old and more tolerant times he was a freer agent. He had more room every way. Five acts and some two score or so of *dramatis personæ* will only be suffered now when hallowed by the name of Shakespeare; and even Shakespeare, as every one knows, has to be considerably pared down before he suits our modern notions of theatric reasonableness. Our craving for fine scenery, and especially for what we are pleased to call archaeological accuracy, makes it imperative that the action shall be packed into a nutshell. Conceive such a play as *Antony and Cleopatra* being presented now, where in a single act the scene is changed from Syria

to Rome, from Rome to Alexandria, from Alexandria to Athens, from Athens again to Rome, then to Actium, and finally back to Alexandria. Such a problem might give even the boldest Shakespearian renovator pause. But the dramatist is most restricted in this, that he has no voice of his own: he cannot delay the action while he explains: all explanation must be made through the action. The functions of that most useful personage, the messenger of Greek tragedy, are suffered not at all gladly now. A prologue, or introductory act, is sometimes employed; but the device is not admired, and indeed is rarely successful. Where the novelist therefore may use words, the dramatist must use persons.

If we consider the story of this play, we shall, I think, see that the dramatist has not encumbered it with superfluous personages. It was first suggested by Macaulay, in the last and posthumous volume of his history, as a fine theme for novel or play. Donough Macarthy, Earl of Clancarty, was an Irish peer owning vast estates in Munster. He was wedded, a boy of fifteen to a girl of eleven, to Lady Elizabeth Spencer, daughter of Sunderland, then Secretary of State to Charles the Second. After the ceremony the children were parted: she returned to her father's house, he to his estates in Ireland. He became a Roman Catholic, followed the fortunes of James, was taken prisoner by Marlborough at Cork, and sent to the Tower. His estates were bestowed by William on Lord Woodstock, the son of his favourite Portland. After three years of imprisonment Clancarty escaped, made his way to St. Germain, was graciously received and given the command of a regiment of Irish refugees. In 1697 the peace of Ryswick put an end, for the time at any rate, to the hopes of the Jacobites, and Clancarty set himself to make his own peace with the English Government. This was no easy work. His father-in-law could have had his pardon



for the asking, but Sunderland had no mind for a penniless son-in-law: his brother-in-law Spencer, most unpromising of Whigs, had no pity or mercy for a rebel. His only chance lay with his wife, whom he had never seen since they had parted on the steps of the altar. He crossed the Channel in disguise, gained admission to Sunderland's house on pretence of a message to Lady Clancarty from her sick mother, and found his wife as loving as the most impatient husband could desire. Their secret was betrayed to Spencer by a waiting-woman: Clancarty was arrested in his wife's arms and hurried off to the Tower. The town rang with pity for the lovers and fury at the unnatural brother. The Whigs Devonshire and Bedford joined with the Tory Ormond to ask for mercy. The widowed Lady Russell, beloved alike by the King and by the people, came from her retirement, took the young wife with her to the palace, and knelt at William's feet. Clancarty was pardoned on condition that he left England for ever. A pension out of his own estates was granted to him, and he retired with his wife to Germany.

Such was the story Taylor took from history and fashioned with little interference into a play. It was necessary for him to explain the danger Clancarty ran if detected in England, and it would hardly have been safe for him to credit every member of his audience with a sufficient knowledge of English history, even though the history were Macaulay's. He did indeed insert a short argument, or outline of the facts, in the play-bill; but, unless he had come forward like an Ancient Gower and delivered himself of a prologue, his only real means of explanation lay in the play. He therefore brought him over to England to plot against the King, and he wisely took the most notorious of the many plots concocted during that reign—the one known as the Assassination Plot of 1696, with which, as fact, there is no evidence to show that Clancarty

was at any rate personally concerned. But it would never have done to make his hero a mere stabber. He is credited therefore with a double, or rather treble portion of virtue: like Berwick, though with the more vulgar plotters he is not of them, and, though eager for war, will have nothing to do with murder: like Pendergrass, an honourable Roman Catholic gentleman, when he learns the true nature of his colleagues' designs, he makes known the plot on condition that he shall be asked no questions of the plotters. The presence of the characters marked as conspirators in the play-bill is thus accounted for. It cannot be said that they are made unnecessarily conspicuous. After the first act they are seen but for a moment in the prison-yard, and in the first act they waste no time. They but explain to Clancarty their plans, and so explain to the audience his chivalrous nature. One of them, it is true, plays a more conspicuous part. The behaviour of Goodman to the ladies effects the necessary introduction between Clancarty and his wife, thus engaging her interest and the less agreeable interest of her brother. It also furnishes the rogue with a grudge against the young Irishman which is to bear fruit in due season. This Cardell, or "Scum," Goodman did not really figure in the plot till a later stage, when the cry was up after Fenwick; but he was probably privy to it from the beginning, as he was to most malpractices then afoot; and it was certainly more prudent to assign to the most notorious scoundrel of the time the part really shared by two unknown rogues, De la Rue and Fisher. Hunt, the landlord of the inn on Romney Marsh, was an equally notorious agent of smugglers and plotters, and "the Hurst" was their favourite house of call. No excuse need be found for the presence of the King; nor of Portland, the King's most trusted counsellor and friend, to whom all came who would win the royal ear; nor of Spencer, the brother of Lady Clancarty, and son of



the once powerful and still dreaded Sunderland. Such personages as the Princess Anne, the officer of the guard, the smugglers, the gaoler, Mother Hunt, certainly swell the play-bill, but do not seriously encumber the piece: they are not much more loquacious than the fine furniture, they take up much less room, and they are certainly more relevant to the story than Mrs. Kendal's guitar. There is indeed one couple to whom more exception might be taken. Whether there was really a design on the part of Portland and Sunderland to arrange a match between young Woodstock and Lady Clancarty, I do not know; but as Woodstock held the Clancarty estates, and Sunderland's avarice was notorious, there is at least good warrant for the invention. A reason for Woodstock's disinclination to the design is shown in his inclination for Lady Betty Noel, Lord Gainsborough's daughter, a giddy, laughing, affectionate creature; and the lovers' quarrels of these two should add a touch of lightness and comedy to the serious concerns of the other pair. Perhaps, if one wished to be very rigidly economical, the scene in the prison might be struck out; yet, if played in proper proportion, it is not irrelevant. The visit of the delicate young wife to so disorderly a place as the Gate-House prison seems then to have been, is no very extravagant conceit, and might certainly have been trusted to furnish a pretty scene. The rescue of the wretched Goodman from the fury of the men whom he had betrayed adds a fresh touch to the chivalry of Clancarty's nature.<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately there are also chances which an actor, if he has a mind that way, can turn to his own glorification rather than the good of the commonwealth. Mr. Anson first played the part of Goodman, and

played it remarkably well in the earlier scenes: his performance in this scene was also very striking, but it was out of place, out of proportion. The present representative of the part does not go wrong quite so far as did Mr. Anson, because he has not quite the same capacity for doing so; but he does what he can. The jailor, again, is tiresome and foolish in his homage to Mother Hunt's hospitality. It is, of course, possible (indeed, those who have any knowledge of the politics of a theatrical company will be inclined to say it is probable) that here the dramatist was not quite a free agent: that his good nature, or some other cause, triumphed over his better judgment. Still, for the irrelevancy of this scene, if it is to be called irrelevant, the principal share of the blame lies less with him than with the actors.

On the whole, the proportion of the characters is well preserved throughout the piece. The motive is never lost sight of. Husband and wife are always the principal figures. Everything that occurs makes in some degree for them: it either bears on their situation or helps to emphasise and explain their characters. Lady Betty's good-natured banter about "Captain Heseltine," for example, keeps her friend's thoughts turning to the husband who is but a childish memory to her, and whose cause the handsome stranger pleads with such dangerous eloquence: her jealous pique at her lover's fancied disloyalty has this much purpose in it, that it clears the air, makes Lady Clancarty disclaim all share in her brother's design, and sets his face still harder against her and her lord. Spencer's real aversion to his brother-in-law was not his poverty but his principles: that a Roman Catholic, a follower of the Stuarts, and of course a Tory, should own kinship to him was unbearable to the young Whig, with whom party-spirit was a passion that seemed unreasonable even in those fierce times. This could not well have been made clear on the stage; but his de-

<sup>1</sup> The dramatist has probably made Clancarty rather more of a hero than he was: he had been accused of outrages in Ireland too gross even for that time and for the license of civil war. But in so doing Taylor did not exceed his prerogative. Clancarty is not one of those familiar figures in history with which fiction may play no tricks.

sire to bring the rich Clancarty estates back again into his family furnishes an intelligible motive for his more than Roman zeal. If Oxenford's criticism were pushed to its legitimate conclusion, dramatists would have to revert to the primitive simplicity of that most lamentable comedy, *Pyramus and Thisbe*. Indeed, when one considers all the possibilities of a play wrought out of such romantic materials and set in such stirring and familiar times, instead of censuring the author of *Lady Clancarty* for too prodigal homage to the muse of history, one is tempted rather to think that he might have borrowed Clive's famous words, and confessed himself astonished at his own moderation.

If the play be found tedious now or out of date, the fault is hardly the author's: if it prove once more popular, the merit is his much more than the actors'. Those who saw and liked it thirteen years ago may like it less now. For them the charm of novelty will have gone from the affecting story and the fine dramatic situations,—dramatic and theatrical as well, two things which are not necessarily one. Only a work of first-rate quality (first-rate, that is to say, of its kind) will bear revival,—except for those whose notions of a play are bounded by the performance of a favourite player. None of Taylor's many essays in literature were ever quite first rate of their kind; but this play, besides its theatrical dexterity, has the quality of all his work: it is honest, manly, straightforward. There is more flesh and blood, more wholesome living and doing humanity in *Lady Clancarty* than in any play written since. And its language is to match. In the best scenes it is easy, unaffected, unadorned; and eloquent, too, with the eloquence of simplicity and directness, worth all the tropes and rhetoric in the world. Perhaps in the lighter scenes there is some sense of a strain after the antique: in these may come in the old story of the inevitable failure "to exhibit Romans talking slang

and jesting with each other." But skilful players, to whom all fashions of speech but their own are not necessarily ridiculous, should speak the language trippingly enough to give the archaisms a native air. I do not remember that Lady Betty Noel or Lord Woodstock used to seem at all distressed with their vocabulary. Science, with all her ingenious per-adventures, cannot quite bring back the mastodon, and Nature will not; but at least we know it was no pet-dog to be nursed on our nineteenth-century laps. The old-world fashion of speech, like the old-world fashion of clothes, needs a manner other than that which suits well enough the somewhat dishevelled customs of modern society. Exactly what that manner was we do not know; but common sense will teach us that it cannot have been our own. It were unreasonable to blame an actor over much for what may be his misfortune rather than his fault; but it is still more unreasonable to call a writer pedantic or tiresome, because the actor stumbles over the words set down for him. If our modern Mirabels and Millamants look unhappy in their fine clothes we do not blame their tailors. I do not think there is any unreasonable affectation of antiquity in the language of *Lady Clancarty*; the words, at any rate, never obscure the sense. Words, as old Selden said, must be made to fit a man's mouth. To bring on the stage a man of the close of the seventeenth century talking exactly as he would talk in the close of the nineteenth century, were as absurd as to dress William's guards in the bearskin caps and the tunics of Victoria's. It would be more than an anachronism, it would be an affectation. In this, as in other respects, the historical element seems to me sufficient, and not more than sufficient. I may give an instance of one particularly happy touch, which might possibly have passed, and, for all our historical lore, still pass unnoticed. William, in reading over the list of conspirators,

comes on the name of Sir John Friend. "Why does he not stick to brewing bad beer?" mutters the King. The exceeding badness of the beer with which Friend supplied the navy was so notorious that it was rumoured he had poisoned the casks in his zeal for the Jacobite cause; and the rumour, as may be imagined, did not enlist the popular sympathy on his side.

But the fashions of the theatre pass. If a play like this, with a good plot, romantic yet full of human nature, active and vigorous yet tender too, fails now to please, is the fault wholly in the play? If we think over the plays that have been most successful within the last dozen years, putting Shakespeare and Sheridan aside, we shall find that they have not pleased by virtue of the qualities of *Lady Clancarty*. The *Dorcas* and *Diplomacys*, *Hobby-Horses* and *Pinafores*, *Private Secretaries* and *Pickpockets*, *Silver Kings* and *Lights of London*,—whether good or bad matters not now: these plays pleased, and so fulfilled the first purpose of plays. But it is easy to understand that a generation which applauded them might yawn in silence at *Lady Clancarty*. A generation which can buy nineteen editions of *The Epic of Hades* cannot in reason be expected to find much to interest it in *Childe Harold*: the same taste will hardly read with the same pleasure *Les Trois Mousquetaires* and *Pot-Bouille*, *The Last of the Mohicans* and *The Lady of the Aroostook*.

And the actors are naturally in touch with the audience. Whether patrons or clients now give laws to the drama,—or, rather, whether patrons and clients have not now changed places in the theatre, matters not: they are, and must be, in sympathy with each other. The taste for approving *Lady Clancarty* is not in the stalls: the taste for playing it is not on the stage. The romantic drama needs a freer gait and more liberal manner than the modern stage fosters.<sup>1</sup> The cleverest

actors after all are but mortal like the humblest spectators, and their nature must get subdued to what it works in. Neither the French nor the English drama, as now fashioned, can be a good preparation for work of this class, which, whatever its imperfections may be, is at least not unseemly or foolish. Our actors now are praised not for their skill in representing an author's characters, but for their skill in making his characters represent themselves: it is therefore only natural that when the need for putting on some other mortality than their own is imperative, the power of doing so should be found a little rusty. A play like *Lady Clancarty* needs brisk acting, a romantic style, and that particular distinction which, perhaps for want of a better phrase, we call the grand manner: it wants, in short, something which it were hard precisely to define, but must be equally removed from the languorous politeness, the coarse vigour, and the rough bustle which respectively suit the modern modes of comedy, melodrama, and farce. It does not get this manner at the St. James's Theatre. There are many well-skilled actors in this company, but they are strangely out of place in this play. Mr. Kendal alone comes near the mark. Some have declared him to be wanting in spirit, tame, as the phrase goes; and indeed he has not quite the frankness, the impetuosity

all but melodrama, and melodrama is very popular and very well played just now. Perhaps; but between the melodrama of the old world and the new there is all the distance that there is between the old comedy and the new. The memory probably of no living playgoer will furnish him with anything more delightful than Mrs. Bancroft's Polly Eccles: of her Lady Teazle we do not talk so much. Mr. Irving's friends are understood to be greatly pleased with his Jeremy Diddler; but even their affection is less clamorous over his Doricourt. There is the melodrama of the court and of the city: both are excellent, but not in the same way. There is, indeed, an actor now playing at the Adelphi whom I should like much to see in *Lady Clancarty*: I mean Mr. Terriss.

<sup>1</sup> *Lady Clancarty*, it may be said, is after

and jollity, which made Mr. Neville so good a stage cavalier. But he is a sufficiently gallant, chivalrous young soldier, and his manner is both affectionate and earnest where these qualities are wanted. And for his shortcomings there is at least this excuse: an actor cannot play a fool for a hundred nights and transform himself into a hero on the hundred and first. Too young, indeed, he seems for this Clancarty; but it were ungenerous to blame him for a fault which most of us would gladly share, and which, though certainly one of the misfortunes of the piece, is not all his own. But after Mr. Kendal who is to be praised, if the performance be judged by its capacity for realising the author's design? Many have praised Mr. Mackintosh, a skilful actor as every one knows; and no doubt his acting is clever, if we dismiss all thoughts of William. But what a king is this he gives us? William was just, but not amiable—as the French say that we Englishmen are: he was slight and feeble, but he was not senile or decrepit. Mr. Mackintosh, with infinite care, I am sure, and much thought, has produced an amiable sort of old pantaloons with an irritating little cough. How different from that inimitable piece of still life Mr. Sugden showed! Take, again, Mrs. Kendal. There are no doubt many parts which Mrs. Kendal would play admirably and Miss Cavendish could not play at all; but the part of Lady Clancarty is not one. I doubt whether she ever would have played it very well: the domestic manner always became her better than the romantic: she certainly cannot play it now, and she was not wise to try. One remembers Miss Cavendish and wonders what change has been wrought in the character. The grace, the buoyancy, the tender yet dignified archness, the high-bred charm—where have they flown? Well; Tristram knew two Iseults, and we have known two Lady Clancartys.

"Soft—Who is that sits by the dying fire?"

"Iseult."

"Ah! not the Iseult I desire."

In one of the fragments of Mrs. Carlyle's notebook is the record of a visit from Count D'Orsay. She had not seen him for five years, when, one day in 1845, he walked into the little house in Chelsea. "Last time," she writes, "he was as gay as a humming-bird—blue satin cravat, blue velvet waistcoat, cream-coloured coat lined with velvet of the same hue, trousers also of a bright colour, I forget what; white French gloves, two glorious breast-pins attached by a chain, and length enough of gold watch-guard to have hanged himself in. To-day, in compliment to his five more years, he was all in black and brown." This wise sense of the fitness of things (the real *ἀρμονία*) took the quick-eyed lady's fancy. She owned that he was a perfect master of his trade, though it was but the trade of a dandy: "A bungler would have made no allowances for five more years at his time of life; but he had the fine sense to perceive how much better his dress of to-day set off his slightly enlarged figure and slightly worn complexion, than the humming-bird colours of five years back would have done." This sense of fitness is a most useful possession for actors, to men as well as women—as useful, perhaps, as any, for it suggests, and indeed almost entails so many other useful things. Years come to all of us—at least we all hope so; and when they bring the philosophic mind they bring innumerable gifts and blessings with them. Only when we ignore them are they a curse. The time for playing Juliet or Ophelia is not the time for playing Lady Macbeth or Queen Constance. But how much more glory will these larger ventures bring! Any graceful intelligent girl will please as Juliet or Ophelia: only a great actress can show us those imperial women. This is a delicate business, and he who meddles with it must endure to be called personal, impertinent, and I

know not what other hard words. But, in truth, it is a business most extremely pertinent; and personal every one who discusses an actor must be, for acting is the most personal of all professions. It is, indeed, nothing if not personal. We discuss the poet's verses and the painter's pictures; but what we discuss in the actor is himself—his visible, audible, tangible personality. Hence, no doubt, arises that extreme sensitiveness to criticism which marks actors as a body, and sometimes leads them into so much foolishness. On the other hand, they have this vast advantage over us, that, rightly considered, they never grow old. We, the public, are concerned but with their theatric life, and that, if wisely managed, may be one unending prime. They have but to adapt the parts they play to life's

shifting seasons, to keep the thieving years forever at bay. But "the humming-bird colours," and other immoment toys of youth, must grow out of date for them as for us.

The shadows of the past take fanciful shapes, and one must always allow for the gilding mists of memory. Those who are haunted by no inconvenient recollections may like this *Lady Clancarty* well enough. Let us hope they will. The piece, with all its imperfections, native and imparted, is at least refreshing after the empty or inconvenient follies of the last few years. And if Mrs. Kendal's large and long-sustained popularity can help to bring about a change for the better, she will have done more than enough to make us forget a much worse performance than her *Lady Clancarty*.

MOWBRAY MORRIS.

## HET ;

(A ROMANCE OF THE BUSH).

I WAS on some government duty last year in New South Wales, that took me into the local post-offices. In the back parlour, at the Gundaroo post-office, I had a long chat with the son of the post-mistress ; a fine young fellow, perhaps a little over thirty. He was manager to a local sheep-king, and rejoiced in the curious Christian name of Het. The following is his account of the circumstances that led to his being so named.

I was there certainly ; but I don't remember much about it. I was told. I can vouch for the truth of it, for she and him, too, often and often have told it to me, and others. They've told it apart, each by their two selves, and they often tell it together—she telling about him, making him out to have been the hero, and he telling it all so that she was the hero—heroine, I should say. But I expect each of 'em always told it in about the same words. You see it was an epoch like, and sort of fixed itself in their memories—and what happened after, fixed it firmer yet.

I've been manager on this station, up behind here, eight years ; and I was "boy" here [pointing with his pipe-stem to the floor] eight years : at school here in Gundaroo till I was fourteen ; so I suppose it must have been thirty-four years ago—near enough.

The colony wasn't settled near so much as it is now. The coach from Sydney didn't reach Gundaroo not by three days' ride, and the mails was carried on horseback, once a week, the rest of the way. After the coach-road, for a bit—say twenty miles—the track was good enough, and there were stations further than that ; but by the

end of the first day's ride, you reached the last house or hut you were to see till you sighted Gundaroo.

The first night the mail carrier put up at "Paddy's Shanty," a sort of an inn on the track. The next morning he started—all alone, mind you, with valuable mail-bags—across as nasty a piece of bush as you'll find in Australia, and I suppose that says in the world. It was all ti-tree scrub. If you know what that is, you'll understand. Never seen any? Oh, well, it's scrub, that is all little trees, with their leaves all on the top. All of 'em alike. Just too slender and weak to bear a man's climbing up one to look round : too far apart for you to swarm up two at once, arms and legs, you know ; and yet too close for you to see sun or stars, night nor day. That sort of scrub is the cruellest of all. If you know your way, well and good ; but if you once get wrong, Lord help you ! You're bushed, as sure as you're alive. Unless you chance on a track, or come across a camp, you may lie down and give it up. As long as your water barr'l holds out—so'll you. After *that*, you may give yourself a day or two to die in : perhaps another two days, if you're a tough sort. Your bones 'll be there years after. Well, that's what he had to ride through for hours and hours, the second day ; and at night he ought to be about through it, if he kep' the track, and made out to reach the open again. Then the track was across a fern gully, with a creek at the bottom ; and there he camped for the night. Then he had an eighty-mile ride the next day, straight through the Blue-gum forest into Gundaroo.

The chap that rode with the mails then was a splendid fellow. Standard



his name was. Too heavy p'raps for a postman, as we understand 'em, but just the man for that work in those days. It wanted a fellow full of pluck, as strong as a horse, and with all his wits about him. Besides the dangers of the track, and creeks to ford, and the heat, and the snakes at night, there was the loneliness. That one fellow, all alone in that great wild district, riding through the hours in the perfect stillness under the sky. No chance of seeing a soul, and probably not wanting to neither, as things was then. If any one *did* just happen to come across the mail-carriers in those days, it wasn't generally for no good.

He used to say: "When a man's got her Majesty's precious mail-bags, with her own red seals on 'em, in front of the saddle, and only the usual number of hands for pistols, and reins, and all, he don't care much if he *don't* see no one all the ride through." He wasn't one to boast, wasn't Standard; but he had once to defend the mails, with three to one against him, and tried for manslaughter, too, for the way he done it, and acquitted, and carried out of the court on the chaps' shoulders. They tell that tale still here in Gundaroo.

The time I'm telling you of was in the hot season. The ground was all cracked and dry. There hadn't been a drop of rain for months and months, and lots of the creeks was empty. At Gundaroo it had been very bad, and the district round was terrible in want of water.

On the Saturday after New Year's Day, when Standard left "Paddy's Shanty," it was a hot wind, awful to ride in. They thought rain was coming, though.

The boss at the shanty told Standard, as he fixed up his water-barr'l behind him on the saddle, that a store-keeper and his wife and child, and his chum, had started the day before for a station where they'd got a berth. They had to follow the Gundaroo track a bit, and then strike across the bush

to the station. "It isn't far they've to go," he said, "but they're new chums, and the woman looked a bit delicate, as well as having a young baby to carry."

"They've only two horses then," says Standard, looking along the track, "unless the third horse flew."

"No," says the boss; "the woman rode behind one of the men, turn and turn about. A fine young woman she was, too."

"It's to be hoped the chaps hadn't much else to carry, then," says Standard. "I couldn't carry another couple of pounds—let alone a woman and baby—on 'Lady,' without knocking her up."

"Well, you ain't got to," says the boss; and laughs as he watches Standard put "Lady" into a steady canter along the track, where the two sets of hoof-marks showed in the sand.

"Lady" was a fine black mare. Very swift, but just a thought too light for Standard and the bags, some said. He wouldn't allow it. He said: "She reaches Gundaroo as fresh as need be on Monday night, and by the time she has to start on Thursday, she's wild to be on the road." He only travelled once a fortnight on her. The other week he rode a roan, a bigger brute, but not half so sensible and kind-like as "Lady." She was a born lady—Standard used to say. Her mother was "Duchess," whereas the roan was the son of "Milkmaid," although he was called "Emperor." She could have gone the whole way alone, if need be, he said; she was so trustworthy.

Well, he used to tell it how he rode through that Saturday in the ti-tree scrub, thinking of the party on in front, in whose tracks he was galloping. It was just near the end of the scrub, he noticed, where they left off, and started on a scarcely visible track to the station away to the left, fifty miles or so.

He used to say he must have ridden a couple of hours, perhaps, when he saw something on the track, like a

dead person or horse. He had his hand on his pistol as he trotted up to it, he said, thinking of the mails, when he saw it wasn't a horse, or a man, but a tall slip of a young woman, dead, or perhaps only dying, laid on the ground with her back propped against a tree, and a poor little baby clinging to her breast.

"Lord of all!" muttered Standard, as he jumped off "Lady's" back, and stood over the woman. He raised her as tenderly almost as she would have done her own child. The little one, he used to say, started crying—a kind of wail—and opened its eyes in that sort of way that you know it hadn't long stopped crying, but just woke up, and began again where it had left off. I've two kids of my own now, and I know—not that they've ever had to lie alongside a mother as good as dead; and try to get fed and warmed at a breast as cold as that poor soul's. Thank God, no! But for all that, well-fed kids can cry, and cry pitiful, too; so I know how he meant to say this particular kid cried.

Standard hadn't no need to tether "Lady" to make her stop alongside, she was such a reasonable beast; but he put her bridle over a tree-branch, for all that. Certainty is worth a deal of faith, when it's about being left alone in a ti-tree scrub, without your horse and kit.

Then he laid the little one on its mother's shawl, and set to work to bring the mother to. He'd seen men exhausted, and laid down to die from thirst and fatigue, come round; but he wasn't sure, he said, if a woman had to be done for the same as a man—he was a single chap then. But he set to, and got a little water first, and then water with a dash of brandy in it, between her blue lips; and rubbed her forehead and hands well, and laid her so as the blood—once the spirit had started it again—could flow a bit quicker to her poor brain. A bushman has to be a bit of a doctor, you know. Then the baby started to help by giving a loud shriek, and the young

woman opened her eyes, and sighed like; and he kep' on giving her water and spirit, as she could take it, till she could feel herself more comfortable. He didn't start talking to her then, knowing she wanted all her strength to come round; but he put the baby back in her arms, and the mother in her prompted her like to take a good long pull at the drink in the billy—so as the kid might get some in a while, you know.

After a bit, she started to cry in a low sort of way, and then Standard, he set by her, and cheered her up, and told her not to take on. He told her she was found; and that all the worst of being lost was done with, and not to cry, and so on. All the time, poor fellow, though he didn't hurry her, he knew he was losing time dreadfully and would hardly make the creek to camp by before nightfall. Thinking of that, he suddenly remembered the woman had got to go too, or be left to die where she was. Standard was wondering what the deuce he should do with her, when she started and told him how she come there. It seemed she was the wife of the store-keeper, Bannerman, that the boss "Paddy's Shanty" had spoken of; and she says, when they had got part way through the scrub (two days before, mind you) they stopped to change her on to the other horse, and allow 'em to stand about a bit to stretch their legs, the two men. The fools never hitched the horses to anything! All on a sudden, a snake slid across the track, right under the woman's feet. She screamed out, and that startled the horses. Off they went—bolted clean into the scrub, carrying every blessed thing they got with them—water, matches, the billy, and everything. Her husband and his chum tore after them, telling her to be sure and stop where she was. She sat there all alone, and there she'd set! First, waiting patient, and then a little frightened and nervous as the time went on. Then, when it got dark and into the night, and they didn't come, scared out of her life,

and shouting, shouting to 'em to guide 'em to come back; and she tells how she stood there, not daring to move, but trying to see over the trees, and shouting till she couldn't speak, and they never come. By and by she got thirsty and faint, and the child was crying for drink and she'd nothing for it. Then she walked on, hoping to get some water; and then, she said, the trees seemed all to wave about and close in on her, and she sank down exhausted, and must have been in a sort of sleep and swoon, mixed, till Standard found her.

She says to Standard, "They must be killed," and cries awfully.

"Poor fellows," said Standard. He knew that being "killed" would be pleasant to dying of thirst, as they most likely would do, once they got lost there. But he tried to comfort her; and to please her, he shouts again. Though, as he said, after two days, and she and the baby shouting all they could most of the time, and they not come back it weren't likely they were within hail *now*! He made her understand this at last. Says he, "Very likely they've got to camp;" to comfort her, you understand. Then he started to say how was they and the baby to get out of this? She didn't want to move from where she was, poor woman, in case her husband should come back; but Standard says to her: "You can't do your husband no good by stopping here; and if you get quick to Gundaroo, you could tell 'em to send out a search party; and besides, ma'am, your little one can't manage another night in the bush."

"No, sir," she says. She was a gentle, docile thing, and see he was right; and then she says to him, helpless and grateful like, "Could we ride behind you, sir?"

Poor Standard! He felt stumped: He didn't know what to say. He looked at the tall young woman and the baby, and then at himself and the horse already well weighted with his camping-kit and the mails. It wasn't

possible! and he knew it. There was ten miles or so, to be done that night, before they got to the creek. It was late now, nearly seven. It would be dark as pitch in the scrub before they got there, even if "Lady" could carry all that load so far as that; but as to carrying them all to Gundaroo, eighty miles further on—he knew she couldn't do it. Besides, nothing was allowed to delay the mails. He would be late as it was, for the stop he'd made. It must be a couple of days, at best, before he'd get there, carrying all that extra weight.

So Standard stood for a moment or two and thought it all over, while he watched the girl (for she was no more) straighten herself and the child, and struggle to stand. Seeing her stagger a bit called him to himself; and he thinks as he gave her his hand to steady her, "Damn her majesty's mail regulations! I'll take her, somehow!"

So he gets his blanket out of his kit and straps it behind the saddle, and then he took and laid the baby on the tree-root, while he swung the woman on to the blanket, behind the saddle. Then he handed her up the child, and got carefully into the saddle himself, leaving them all the room he could, she used to say. "Lady" looked round, a bit doubtful of the extra weight and the dangling petticoats on one side; but started right enough when Standard told her it had got to be done.

There wasn't much said on the ride. It was rough stepping, and "Lady" 'd to pick her way; and Standard had to help her, and steady the poor lass behind with the baby in her right arm and her left hand on his belt; and she was looking and looking, on both sides, to see if she could see the two men. Except to beg Standard to stop a minute and shout, once or twice, in case her husband and his chum was near, she never spoke. Standard knew it must be hopeless, and the further they got the more hopeless it must get; but he was a tender-hearted fellow, and he couldn't stand hearing

the poor soul crying in a hopeless sort of way behind him, and not do something to please her. But all the way, the baby lay there as peaceful and comfortable as we are now this minute.

When they got to the creek it was nearly dark, and the woman was swaying in the saddle, though she'd sat straight enough at first. Noticing this, Standard says, suddenly, "Missus, have you ever rode alone?"

She gives a sort of start, and sits up, and says, "Oh, yes, I've rode a great deal when I was a girl; but I'm that tired now, and feel so weak, that I can't sit up." She thought he was wondering at her leaning against him so heavy. But that wasn't what Standard was thinking. He knew himself what it was to sway, nearly to falling straight out of the saddle, from fatigue and want of food and water. No: he was thinking of a plan for the next day. When they got to the creek he sets the woman down, and hobbles "Lady," and gives her mouth a sponge out, and a bit of a rub, to last till he could see to her when she was cool. Then he got some sticks and dry grass (no fear of the wood being wet in a hot season hereabouts!) together for a fire, and as soon as it burns up puts the billy over it. Then he hunted in his kit for a tin of milk he'd got—not to put in his tea, but to use for butter! He thought it would be just the thing for the woman, seeing she'd to nurse the child. She had a whole pannikin full of warm milk—did her a power of good; and when he'd got her to eat a bit of sopped bread, and had his own tea, he gave her a towel, and told her if she'd feel better for washing her face and hands and that, the creek was safe to do it in. He went off to see to "Lady"; and before he went, he put his comb, and a bit of looking-glass he carried, where she could see 'em and take 'em if she liked. He was always a bit of a dandy. But he didn't say nothing to her about the comb and glass, because, being a bachelor, of course he felt delicate about suggesting as her hair was hanging all

down her back in two long fair plaits. Standard used to say it was prettiest so, to his mind, but he thought she'd feel vexed if she knew he noticed it. So he just put the bit of glass handy, and took himself off.

When he came back, he says, he found the baby asleep, and smoothed and tidied somehow, and the woman as neat as a pin—women are so clever at straightening themselves—and the pannikin and that washed up, and the fire raked together. The woman sat there with her needle-book on her knee—she had it in a pocket, she says—sewing up a tear in her frock, where it had caught in one of the saddle-buckles. Standard didn't say nothing much that night, but he had made up his mind; and after making a shelter of branches and fern, and seen the mother and baby laid down under it one side of the fire, he stretched himself the other side, with his head on the mail-bags, and thought out what he'd decided to do. The woman and child must get to Gundaroo, and before the next night too: so must the mails. "Lady" could carry them well enough, but she couldn't carry him as well. Very well: then he'd stay behind and walk. "Lady" would go along the track through the forest alone, he knew; and if only the girl would have the pluck to trust herself to the mare, and just sit still and hold the reins, they'd all get to Gundaroo, safe as a church. She could then deliver up the bags at the post-office, and tell them to send out a search-party to look after her husband and his chum, and a horse to meet him.

He knew he was sure to get into trouble with the authorities for risking it, especially if it failed; and he knew, too, that it was no fun to be left to walk through the forest in riding-boots and breeches, and with nothing but a few biscuits and a pistol. The water barr'l he meant to fill, and fix in its place behind the saddle, and the rest of the tin of milk, and the bread (damper, of course, you

know), and the tinned meat. Women needed a deal of feeding, especially when they'd a baby to feed too, he thought. And she must take one of the pistols.

His chief fear was she'd be too soft-hearted to like to leave him behind; and yet he knew it couldn't be done under a couple of days, or more likely four, if they tried to go altogether. Though he said, "Damn her Majesty's mails!" he daren't delay 'em so long, for all that. "Damning" wouldn't hurt 'em, or him either; but delaying 'em would be the very devil for them, and him too!

As soon as it was light, he set to work separating the things he was going to keep from those he was going to send on with the "Royal She-mail," as he called her in joke to himself. He looked at the two sleeping the other side of the fire under the open sky. The kid was comfortable enough, cradled in soft arms; but the mother was lying just about as uncomfortably as it's possible to lie, so as to shelter the child. Standard, who noticed everything, made a note of this, and thought he'd work on her maternal feelings most to get her to go on in the morning.

After he'd fed "Lady," about five o'clock, he groomed her up in style, for, he used to say, he must have the horse that carried the "Royal She-mail" as smart as possible. Later on, when he saw the woman after her night's rest in the fresh early morning, and had got her to eat a bit of breakfast, he was quite pleased to see how much better she looked.

He'd a great work, he said, to make her go without him, though she wasn't a bit afraid for herself. He had to say he shouldn't be so far behind, and swear he could walk pretty nearly as fast as "Lady" 'd go, and so on. He showed her how to fire the pistol, and told her to let "Lady" choose the way if she felt doubtful about the track among the gum-trees. Of course he cheered her up all he could, though feeling bad at letting a woman and a baby go

alone all that way. You see, there were bushrangers to be feared then. He was afraid to say much about taking care of the mails for fear of frightening her. He just said, there they was, in front of the saddle, and that she must take 'em straight to the office, and not let any one but the people of the office touch them. Then he told her about sending the two parties back to meet him and her husband. He said—as he saw her sitting so easy in the saddle, and the baby lying in her lap, tied to her by her shawl; and her right arm free for the pistol, if need be, his spirits rose a bit—she looked able to do it. He wanted to give her his mail-badge, but she says no, she wouldn't have it. She'd be safer without. He didn't quite see what she meant. But when it was all over—but there, if I tell you the story that way, you'll know how it ended too soon.

Well, there ain't much more to tell after all. Mother, she rode straight along the track into Gundaroo. Ah! I see I've told you now! Yes, it was my mother, that was; and I'm the baby!

She said why she wouldn't wear the badge was for the same reason as she hung her shawl over the mail-bags as soon as she was out of Standard's sight. No one, she thought, would think a woman and child worth robbing.

She left him just at the beginning of the forest. He says he walked by the horse a bit to see how she carried her; and then he let her start off at a gentle canter. He used to say he never felt so dead lonely as when the brave young creature turned round and waved her hand, and says, "Good-bye, and God bless you for saving his life"—meaning me in her arms!—and then was hid from him in the trees.

Well, to cut a long story short, mother and me rode into Gundaroo at nine o'clock—two and a half hours after time. All the place turns out to see who it was. A woman riding

alone with a baby! They were all so took up with the young woman (my mother was a very personable young woman) they never noticed she was on "Lady," though there must have been lots as knew Standard's mare well enough.

Mother was dead tired; and I was asleep, as comfortable as I am now by this fire.

She rides straight up to the post-office, and one of the chaps lifts her down; but she wouldn't let one on 'em touch the mail-bags, but drags them off herself, and says, standing on the doorstep with me in her arms, and the mails at her feet: "If you please, gentlemen, I've brought in the mails. The gentleman lent me his horse. I was lost; and will you send a horse to meet him. He's walking from the fern-gully. And 'Lady' is to be seen to, please." And then she drops down on the step pretty nigh done.

The chaps set to and cheered her—cheer after cheer, till mother was drawn in out of the noise by the post-master's wife, who told 'em they

ought to know better than make a lady so shamefaced, so tired as she was, too. The old lady was quite as astonished as any of them, for all she said to the chaps to hold their noise; and quite proud to have the first hearing of it all from mother, as she put her and me to bed in her own room. Well, the end of it was, Standard he was met right enough, and brought in the next afternoon. But they never found my poor father and his chum—not till months after, and then it was bones they found. Mother, she stayed on, and helped the post-mistress at Gundaroo, who was getting oldish.

So that's how a woman brought her Majesty's mails into Gundaroo; and *that's* why I'm called Het.

Don't see why? Oh! I forgot to say that when I was christened, a month or so after, mother called me after Standard, as had saved us both. Didn't I tell you his name was Hector? --Het, for short. Het Standard, he was: I'm Het Bannerman; but mother, she is Mrs. Het Standard now, post-mistress of Gundaroo. I dessay you guessed as much.



THE MAKING OF BRITAIN.<sup>1</sup>

I HAVE chosen for consideration this evening a subject which may on the one hand be discussed from the purely literary, and on the other from the strictly scientific side, but which is most thoroughly investigated by united research in both directions. I propose to ask your attention to the changes which have taken place in the outward aspect of this country since man first set foot upon its surface, and to the sources of information regarding them. That this subject appeals strongly to the instincts of the lover of science needs not to be insisted upon here. It deals with the evidence for many kinds of geological operations, and with their rate of progress. It may, consequently, be made to throw light upon one of the vexed problems of science—the value of time in geological inquiry. Of its relations to literature I would fain say more, because it seems to me eminently calculated to engage the sympathies and even the active co-operation of literary students. There can be no doubt that the future advancement of our knowledge of this question must depend largely upon help from the literary side.

A generation has hardly passed away since the truth was recognised that man is in large measure the creature of his environment; that his material progress and mental development have been guided and modified by the natural conditions in which he has been placed. The full extent and application of this truth, however, are probably not even yet realised by us. If the surrounding and limiting con-

ditions have been such potent factors in human development, we may well believe that any serious change or modification in them cannot but have reacted upon man. If nature alters her aspect to him, he too will in some measure be affected thereby, and his relations to her will be influenced. What then have been the kind and amount of the mutations in the face of nature since man first appeared? In trying to answer this question I will restrict myself, for the present, to the consideration of the evidence in the case of Great Britain; but it will be understood that the principles laid down for the conduct of the inquiry with regard to this country must be of general application to other regions of the globe.

Let me remark at the outset that considerable progress has been made in the investigation of this question, both from its scientific and its historical side. Lyell, and my revered friend Professor Prestwich, with the geologists who have followed them, have laid a solid foundation of knowledge regarding the later mutations in the physical geography of Britain. Guest, Pearson, Freeman, Green, and others, have shown in how many ways the historical development of the people has been influenced by the topographical features of the country. Yet in spite of all that has been done, I do not hesitate to say that we are still only a little way beyond the threshold of this wide subject. No one has realised more vividly at once the importance of the inquiry and the imperfection of the available data than the late Mr. J. R. Green. He would fain have been able to reconstruct the successive phases through which our landscapes have passed since the dawn of history; and he did more in this respect

<sup>1</sup> *The Changes in the Outward Aspect of Britain since Man appeared in the Country*: an address given in the lecture-hall of the University Museum, Oxford, on March 1st, 1887.

with his materials than probably any other living man could have done. But the detailed evidence was wanting to him ; and it has still to be gathered before the ideal of the historian can be reached. Now, I am desirous of insisting upon the fact that this detailed evidence does not lie shut up from the reach of all but the practised man of science and the mature historian. Much of it, whether in the literary or scientific domain, may be gleaned by any young undergraduate who will bring to the task quickness of observation and accuracy of judgment. As the harvest is abundant but the labourers few, I would fain enlist the sympathy and co-operation of any who may be able and willing to help.

For the sake of clearness, I will divide my remarks into two portions. The first of these will deal with the nature and sources of the evidence from which we know that the outer aspect of the country has undergone many vicissitudes : the second will be devoted to the character of the changes themselves.

I. There are four obvious sources of information regarding former conditions of the land. First comes the testimony of historical documents, then that of place-names, next that of tradition, and, lastly, that of geological evidence.

(1) One might suppose that for what has taken place during the historical period, the evidence of history would be all sufficient. But it is only recently that the subject has been determined to be worthy of the historian's serious attention, and hence we cannot look for much light to be thrown upon it in the pages of the ordinary histories. Nor need we expect to meet with any full measure of information regarding it in the original documents from which these histories are compiled. In truth, the facts of which we are in search must be gleaned from brief allusions and implications rather than from actual descriptions. It was no part of the

duty of an old chronicler purposely to record any natural fact, short of some terrific earthquake or storm that destroyed human life and damaged human property. But in describing historical events he could hardly avoid reference to woods, lakes, marshes, and other natural features which served as boundaries to the theatre of these events. By comparing, therefore, his local topography with the present aspect of the same localities, we may glean some interesting particulars as to changes of topography in the course of centuries. Such a comparison, however, to be effective and trustworthy, involves two special qualifications. The inquirer must be a thorough master of the language and style of the author he is studying, and he must be completely familiar with the present condition of the ground to which allusion is made. The want of this combination of knowledge has led to some curious blunders on the part of able scholars.

It is evident, then, that a vast domain of research is here opened out to the student. In a general sense, every historical document may be available for the purposes of the inquiry. Besides the narratives of the old Chronicles, which might be expected to contain at least occasional incidental reference to physical features, much information may be gleaned from quarters that might be thought the most unlikely. Charters and other legal documents, in dealing with the holding and transference of land, not infrequently throw light on the former aspect of the ground with which they are connected. The Cartularies of some of our ancient abbeys, besides affording glimpses into the inner life of these establishments, which do not seem to have been always abodes of peace and studious retirement, give indications of the former areas of forest, woods and mosses, or the positions of lakes now reduced in size or effaced. Old Acts of Parliament, looked at from our present point of view, are by no means always repulsive reading.

They have one great advantage over their modern representatives in that they are often commendably brief; and in their occasional quaint local colouring, they afford material for interesting comparison with existing topography.

Among historical documents I include poems of all kinds and ages. Our earliest English literature is poetical; and from the days of Caedmon down to our own time, the typical characters of landscape have found faithful reflection in our national poetry. It is not merely from what are called descriptive poems that information of the kind required is to be gathered. The wild border-ballad, full of the rough warfare of the time, has a background of bare moorland, treacherous moss-hags, and desolate hills, which can be compared with the aspect of the same region to-day. The gentler lyrics of a later time take their local colouring from the glades and dells, the burns and pastures where their scenes are laid. In the stately cadence of the *Fuery Queen* among the visionary splendours of another world the rivers of England and Ireland are pictured, each with its characters touched off as they appeared in the days of Elizabeth. And in Drayton's quaint, but somewhat tiresome *Polyolbion*, abundant material is supplied for a comparison between the topography of England at the beginning of the seventeenth century and that of our own time.

But these comparisons have still to be worked out. As an example of the kind of use that may be made of them, and of the light which our poetry may cast, not only upon physical changes, but upon historical facts, I would refer to the passages in Barbour's poem of *The Bruce* descriptive of the Battle of Bannockburn. I do not mean to contend for the historical veracity of the Archdeacon of Aberdeen, though I think he hardly deserves the sweeping and contemptuous condemnation meted out to him by Mr. Green. As he was born only some two years after the

battle, as he had travelled a good deal, and as the field of Bannockburn lay across the land-route from the north to the south of Scotland, we may believe him to have made himself personally acquainted with the ground. At least, he could easily obtain information from many who had been themselves actors in the fight. He had no object to gain by drawing on his imagination for the local topography, more especially as his little bits of local description were not in any way required for the glorification of his hero. I think, therefore, that when Barbour describes a piece of ground, we may take his description as accurately representing the topography at least in his own day; and it could hardly have changed much in the generation that had passed since the time of Bruce. Now, many persons who have visited the site of the Battle of Bannockburn have felt some difficulty in understanding why the English army did not easily outflank the left wing of the Scots. At present, a wide fertile plain stretches for miles to the north and south of the low plateau on which Bruce's forces were drawn up. A small body of the English cavalry did, indeed, make its way across this plain until overtaken and cut to pieces by Randolph. But why was this force so easily dispersed, and why was no more formidable and persistent effort made to turn that left flank? It is very clear that, had the topography been then what it is now, the Battle of Bannockburn must have had a far other ending.

The true explanation of the difficulty seems to me to be supplied by some almost casual references in Barbour's account of the operations. He makes Bruce, in addressing his followers, allude to the advantage they would gain should the enemy attempt to pass by the morass beneath them. The poet further narrates how the Carse, that is, the low flat land on the left, was dotted with pools of water: how the English, in order to effect a passage, broke down houses, and tried to

bridge over these pools with doors, windows, and thatch from the cottage roofs; and how, with the assistance of their compatriots in Stirling Castle, they were so far successful that Clifford's troop of horse, and, possibly, some more of the English army, got safely over to the hard ground beyond. We thus learn that Bruce's famous device of the "pots" was only an extension of the kind of defence that nature had already provided for him. The ground on his left, now so dry and so richly cultivated, was then covered with impassable bogs and sheets of water; and the huge army of Edward was consequently compelled to crowd its attack into the narrow space between these bogs and the higher grounds on Bruce's right.

(2) Another wide field of inquiry for information touching changes in the aspect of the country is supplied by the etymology of place-names. These names, at least those of them that date from old times, possess a peculiar value and interest as abiding records of the people who gave them, and also, in many cases, of the circumstances in which they were given. We are at present concerned only with those that embody some physical fact in the topography. Many of these are as appropriate now as they were at first; for the features to which they were applied have remained unaltered. Ben Nevis is as truly the "Hill of Heaven" to-day as when the earliest Celtic tribe looked up to it from the glens below. The big stones on the summit of Penmaenmawr still stand as memorials of the British people who erected and named them.

But in innumerable instances the appropriateness of the designation has been lost. The name has, in fact, been more permanent than the feature to which it was applied. The one has survived in daily speech from generation to generation: the other has wholly passed away. By comparing the descriptive epithet in the name with the present aspect of the locality, some indication, or even,

perhaps, some measure of the nature and amount of the changes in the topography, may still be recovered.

Now in researches of this kind the liability to blunder is so great, and many able writers have blundered so egregiously, that the inquiry ought not to be entered upon without due preparation, and should not be continued without constant exercise of the most scrupulous caution. The great danger of being betrayed into error by the plausibilities of phonetic etymology should never for a moment be lost sight of. Where possible the earliest form of the name should be recovered, for in the course of time local names are apt to be so corrupted as to lose all obvious trace of their original orthography.

The Celtic place-names are as a whole singularly descriptive. The Celtic tribes, indeed, have manifested, in that respect, a keener appreciation of landscape and a more poetical eye for nature than their Saxon successors. Who that has ever stood beneath the sombre shadow of the cloud that so often rests on the shoulders of the Grampians will fail to recognise the peculiar fitness of the Gaelic name for the highest summit of the chain—Ben-na-muich-dubh, "the mountain of dark gloom"? Or who has ever watched the Atlantic billows bursting into white foam against the cliffs of Ardnamurchan and did not acknowledge that only a poetic race could have named the place "the headland of the great sea." The colours of mountain and river have been seized upon by these people as descriptive characters that have suggested local names. Swiftmess and sluggishness of flow have furnished discriminating epithets for rivers. Moors, forests, woodlands, copses, groups of trees, solitary bushes, lakes, mosses, cliffs, gullies, even single boulders, have received names which record some aspect or character that struck the imagination of the old Celt. Many of these names have never found a place on any map, but they are well

known to the Welsh and Gaelic inhabitants who in the more mountainous and trackless regions have often a wonderful acquaintance with the details of the topography.

Here, then, in the Celtic place-names of the country lies a wide and practically as yet untouched domain for exploration. Civilisation has advanced less rapidly and ruthlessly in the Celtic-speaking parts of the country. In these districts, too, there are fewer historical records of progress and change. But the topographical names when carefully worked out will doubtless supply much information regarding former aspects of the country. Taken in connection with a minute examination of the present topography, they may be found to preserve a record of former conditions of surface whereof every other memorial has for ever perished.

Our Saxon progenitors, also, gave appropriate local names; but with a sturdy self-assertion, and prosaic regard for plain fact, they chose to couple their own *cognomina* with them. If a settler fenced in his own inclosure he called it his "ton" or his "ham." If he felled the trees of the primeval woodlands and made his own clearance, it became his "fold." If he built himself a mud cottage it was his "cote," or if he attained to the dignity of a farm he called it his "stead." As he and his brethren increased their holdings and drew their houses together for companionship and protection, the village kept their family name. But besides these patronymic epithets, which are of such value in tracing out the early settlement of the country, the English gave more or less descriptive local names. In their "holts" and "hursts," "wealds" and "shaws," we can still tell where their woods lay. In their "leighs," "fields," and "royds," we can yet trace the open clearings in these woods. But for the broad landmarks and larger natural features of the country, the Saxons were generally content to adopt, in some more

or less corrupted form, the names already given by the Celtic tribes who had preceded them.

(3) As another but less reliable source of information regarding alterations in the surface of the country, I would make brief allusion to the subject of local tradition. In these days of education and locomotion, we can hardly perhaps realise how tenacious, and on the whole faithful, the human memory may be in spite of the absence of written or printed documents. Even yet we see the unbroken and exact record of the true boundaries of a parish or township handed down in the annual beating of the bounds or riding of the marches. And even where no such ceremony has tended to perpetuate the remembrance of topographical details, tradition, though it may vary as to historical facts, is often singularly true to locality. I am tempted to give what seems to me a good example of this fidelity of tradition. Many years ago among the uplands of Lammermuir I made the acquaintance of an old maiden lady, Miss Darling of Priestlaw, who with her bachelor brothers tenanted a farm which their family had held for many generations. In the course of her observant and reflective life she had gathered up and treasured in her recollection the traditions and legends of these pastoral solitudes. I well remember, among the tales she delighted to pour into the ear of a sympathetic listener, one that went back to the time of the Battle of Dunbar. We know from his own letters in what straits Cromwell felt himself to be when he found his only practicable line of retreat through the hills barred by the Covenanting army, and how he wrote urgently to the English commander at Newcastle for help in the enemy's rear. It has usually been supposed that his communications with England were kept up only by sea. But the weather was boisterous at the time, and a vessel bound for Berwick or Newcastle might



have been driven far away from land. There is therefore every probability that Cromwell would try to send a communication by land also. Now the tradition of Lammermuir maintains that he did so. The story is told that he sent two soldiers disguised as natives of the district to push their way through the hills and over the border. The men had got as far as the valley of the Whiteadder, and were riding past the mouth of one of the narrow glens, when a gust of wind, sweeping out of the hollow, lifted up their hodden-grey cloaks and showed their military garb beneath. They had been watched, and were now overtaken and shot. Miss Darling told me that tradition had always pointed to an old thorn-bush at the opening of the cleugh as the spot where they were buried. At her instigation the ground was dug up there, and among some mouldering bones were found a few sorely decayed military buttons with a coin of the time of Charles the First.

Tradition is no doubt often entirely erroneous; but it ought not, I think, to be summarily dismissed without at least critical examination. There are doubtless instances where it might come in to corroborate conclusions deducible from other and usually more reliable kinds of evidence.

(4) But of all the sources of information regarding bygone mutations of the surface of the land, undoubtedly the most important is that supplied by the testimony of geology. Early human chronicles are not only imperfect, but may be erroneous. The chronicle, however, which Nature has compiled of her past vicissitudes, though it may be fragmentary, is, at least, accurate. In interpreting it the geologist is liable, indeed, to make mistakes; but these can be corrected by subsequent investigation, while the natural chronicle itself remains unaffected by them. Moreover, it embraces a vast period of time. Historical evidence in this country is comprised within the limits of nineteen centuries.

The testimony from Celtic topographical names may go back some hundreds of years further. But the geological record of the human period carries us enormously beyond these dates. Hence, in so vast a lapse of time, scope has been afforded for a whole series of important geological revolutions. On every side of us we may see manifest proofs of these changes. The general aspect of the country has been altered, not once only, but many times. The agencies that brought about these changes have, in not a few instances, preserved tolerably complete memorials of them. We are thus enabled to trace the history of lakes and rivers, of forests and mosses: we can follow the succession and migrations of the animals that have wandered over the land, and many of which had died out ere the days of history began: we can dimly perceive the conditions of life of the earliest human population of the country: we can recover abundant evidence of the extraordinary vicissitudes of climate which since these ancient times have affected, not this land only, but the whole northern hemisphere.

II. I come now to the second division of my subject—the character of the changes in the general aspect of Britain since man first appeared in the country. It must be obvious that only the very briefest outline of this wide range of topics is possible here. My object will be gained, however, if I can present such a rapid sketch as will show the general nature of the changes and indicate the lines along which further inquiry is needed. Much earnest investigation in all the kinds of research which I have enumerated will be required before anything like a completed picture can be given of the successive geographical phases which man has witnessed here.

Let us then try to raise a little the curtain of obscurity that hangs over that far-off time when the earliest human inhabitants found their way to this region. The first and most memorable feature in the topography



of that dim antiquity is one about which there can hardly be any doubt. Britain was not yet an island. The downs of Kent ran on across what is now the Strait of Dover, and joined the downs of Picardy. A large tract of the bed of the North Sea, all the southern part at least, was then dry land—a wide plain, across which the Thames meandered northward to join the Rhine. Whether Ireland had already been separated from the rest of Britain has not yet been ascertained; but England and Scotland were parts of the continent, and prolonged the dry land of Europe boldly westward into the Atlantic Ocean. It was over these downs now lost, and across these plains now submerged beneath the sea, that the first human population entered our region. Judged by the relics they have left behind them of their handiwork, these earliest Britons must have been a race of rude savages, fashioning their weapons and tools out of flint and out of the bones of the animals they killed in the chase: clad in skins, living in caves, rock-shelters, and holes dug in the earth; and waging incessant warfare, if not with each other, at least with a host of wild beasts of the field, and with a climate more inclement than any now to be found within the bounds of Europe.

At the time of its greatest rigour, the climate of the north-west of Europe, during these remote ages, resembled that of northern Greenland at the present day. Vast fields of ice and snow lay over all the northern and central parts of Britain. One wide glacier, descending from Scandinavia, extended across the site of the North Sea, and, joining the English ice, advanced southward nearly as far as London. The ice that streamed off the west of Scotland and Ireland went out into the Atlantic as one widely-extending wall which cumbered the ocean with icebergs. The only part of the country not then invaded by the northern ice, and, therefore, habitable by man, was the southern strip that stretched from France and the mouth

of the Thames to the Bristol Channel. But so great was the cold of winter that the ground in that southern tract was probably frozen hard for some depth, and only melted at the surface in summer. The rapid thawing of the snows in warm weather gave rise to floods that swelled the streams and deluged the surface of the country. Truly a most inhospitable time! One might well wonder what could have brought even the most forlorn race of men to these forbidding and ice-bound shores. But, in all probability, man was in the country before the climate became so severe, and was gradually driven southward by the increase of the cold and the advance of the ice.

Of the animals that were contemporaneous with man during these dreary centuries some relics have been preserved. We know that the reindeer wandered over the west of Europe as far, at least, as the south of France. The musk-sheep, too, the glutton, the arctic fox, the lemming, and other truly northern forms of life, pushed southward by the advance of the ice-fields, roamed over Britain and central Europe. With these still living species others appeared which have long been extinct, such as the hairy mammoth and the woolly rhinoceros, both of which have left their bones in many parts of the south of England.

But the temperature was not continuously arctic. There came intervals of milder seasons, when the ground thawed, and the snow disappeared, and the glaciers shrank away northward. During these more congenial periods, animals of temperate and southern climes found their way into the west and north. In the valley of the Thames, for instance, elephants and rhinoceroses browsed on luxuriant herbage. Among the glades, on either side, the stag and roe and the huge-antlered Irish elk found ample pasturage. Herds of wild urus and bison moved across the plain; and in the woods the brown bear, the grizzly bear, and the wild boar found a home. In the wake of this abundant animal

life came the carnivora that preyed upon it. Among the sounds familiar to human ears all along the valley were the nightly roar of the lion, the yell of the wild cat, the howl of the hyena, and the bay of the wolf. The river itself teemed with life. In its waters the African hippopotamus gambolled and the beaver built his dams.

Slow secular changes that influenced the climate once more brought back the cold, and drove southward this abundant animal life. As the snow and ice returned, the contest between frost and warmth gave rise to floods that swept across the frozen ground and strewed it with loose deposits, among which human implements and the bones of animals, both of northern and southern types, were mingled together. How far these animals were really coeval in the country, or whether their apparent association is not the result of the accidental mixing up of their remains, is an interesting problem not yet solved. Indeed, the story of what are called the "valley-gravels" is still very imperfectly understood, and offers many attractions to the enthusiastic observer.

Let us now come down the stream of time, across the long series of centuries that intervened between the Ice Age and the beginning of history, and look at the aspect presented by the country when the Romans entered it nineteen hundred years ago. What a momentous change had in this long interval passed over it! First and most important of all, Britain was no longer a part of the continent, but had become an island, separated then, as now, by a strip of rough sea-channel from the nearest part of Europe. The climate, too, had changed: snow-fields and glaciers had vanished: the summers and winters had become much what they are still. Of the characteristic animals, some had disappeared others had become rare. The lion, hyena, rhinoceros, elephant and hippopotamus, for instance, had retreated to more southern latitudes; but the wolf, brown bear, and wild boar still

haunted the forests. The early tribe of men, too, who made the flint weapons found in the valley-gravels, had been driven away or been swallowed up by successive waves of immigrants from the great family of the Celts, who were now the dominant race in these islands.

In trying to account for such great changes in the character of the outer aspect of Britain, a wide range of investigation opens out to us, wherein but little progress has yet been made. For example, what were the circumstances under which Britain became an island? That this geological revolution was mainly due to a subsidence of the region can hardly be doubted. To this day, between tide marks, or below low water, we can still see the stumps of trees standing where they grew, and beds of peat containing nuts and other vestiges of a land vegetation. These "submerged forests" are proofs of a comparatively recent sinking, and are, no doubt, to be regarded as relics of the general mantle of wood and bog that covered the country at the time of the downward movement. The floor of the North Sea still preserves many of the features which must have marked the former wide terrestrial plain that occupied its site. From the headlands of Yorkshire the line of cliff is prolonged as a steep submarine bank for many miles towards the coast of Denmark, broken by two gorges or valleys, in the westmost of which may have flowed the Thames, while the eastmost gave passage to the Rhine. Was the subsidence slow and tranquil, or was it sudden, and accompanied with waves of disturbance that devastated the lower grounds of western Europe?

The last connecting link between Britain and the continent was probably the line of chalk-ridge between Dover and Calais. There is some reason to surmise that it survived the submergence of the northern plain. Along this narrow ridge the earliest Celtic immigrants may have made their way. Its ultimate disappearance is probably referable rather to

erosion at the surface than to underground movements. Attacked on the one side by the breakers driven against it by the south-western gales from the Atlantic, and on the other by those of the North Sea, it would eventually be cut through. When once the tides of the two seas united, their progress for a time would be comparatively rapid in sawing down the soft chalk, in widening for themselves a passage and deepening it as far as the downward limit of their erosive power. But to this day the narrows of the strait remain so shallow that, as has often been said, St. Paul's Cathedral, if set down there, would rise half out of the water.

Since the subsidence of the great plain, other manifestations of underground energy have shown themselves within the British area. Some portions of the land have been elevated, and in the selvae of uplifted coastline relics of the human occupants of the country have been found. In other places, renewed depression has been suspected to have occurred. But the evidence for these upward and downward movements deserves further careful investigation both from the geological and the historical side.

Though on the whole singularly free from those more violent exhibitions of subterranean activity which, as within the last few days, have carried death and destruction far and wide through some of the fairest regions of the earth's surface, Britain has from time to time been visited by earthquakes of severity enough to damage public buildings. The cathedral of St. David's, in its uneven floor and dislocated walls, still bears witness to the shock which six hundred years ago did so much injury to the churches of the west of England. But though a formidable catalogue has been drawn up of the earthquakes experienced within the limits of these islands, it is not to that kind of underground disturbance that much permanent alteration of the surface of the country is to be attributed.

At the dawn of history the general appearance of this country must have presented in many respects a contrast to that which we see now; and notably in the wide spread of its forests, in the abundance of its bogs and fens, and (through the northern districts) in the prodigious number of its lakes.

At the first coming of the Romans by far the larger part of the country was probably covered with wood. During the centuries of Roman occupation some of the less dense parts of the woodland were cleared. In driving their magnificent straight highways through the country, the Roman legionaries felled the trees for seventy yards on each side of them to secure them from the arrows of a lurking foe. So stupendous was the labour involved in this task, that they gladly avoided forests where that was possible, and sometimes even swung their roads to right or left to keep clear of these formidable obstacles. For many hundreds of years after the departure of the legions, vast tracts of primeval forest remained as impenetrable barriers between different tribes. In these natural fastnesses the wolf, brown bear, and wild boar still found a secure retreat. Even as late as the twelfth century the woods to the north of London swarmed with wild boars and wild oxen. Everywhere, too, the broken men of the community betook themselves to these impenetrable retreats, where they lived by the chase, and whence they issued for plunder and bloodshed. The forests were thus from time immemorial a singularly important element in the topography. They have now almost entirely disappeared, and their former sites have as yet only been partially determined, though much may doubtless still be done in making our knowledge of them more complete.

In connection with this subject it should be remembered that, in many instances, the areas of wood and open land have in the course of generations

completely changed places. The wide belts of clay-soil that sweep across the island, being specially adapted for the growth of trees, were originally densely timbered. But the process of clearance led to the recognition of the fact that these clay-soils were also eminently fitted for the purposes of agriculture. Hence, by degrees, the sites of the ancient forests were turned into corn-fields and meadows. On the other hand, the open tracts of lighter soil, where the earlier settlers established themselves, were gradually abandoned, and lapsed into wastes of scrub and copsewood.

The fens and bogs of Britain played likewise a large part in the attack and defence of the country in Roman and later times. They were of two kinds. One series lay on the coast, especially in sheltered inlets of the sea, and were liable to inundation by high

tides. The most notable of these was a wide tract of low, swampy land at the head of the Wash, our Fenland—an area where, secure in their amphibious retreats, descendants of the Celtic population preserved their independence not only through Roman but through Saxon times, if indeed,

Mr. Freeman conjectures, outlying settlements of them may not have lingered on till the coming of the Normans. The other sort of fens were those formed in the interior of the country by the gradual encroachment of marshy vegetation over tracts previously occupied by shallow sheets of fresh water and over flat land. It was in these swamps that the Caledonians, according to the exaggerated statement of Xiphiline, concealed themselves for many days at a time, with only their heads projecting above the surface. At a far later time the peat-bogs of the debateable land between England and Scotland formed an important line of advance and retreat to the freebooters of the border, who could pick their way through sloughs that to less practised eyes were impassable.

One of the distinguishing features among the topographical changes of the

last few hundred years has been the disappearance of a vast number of these fens and bogs. In some cases they have been gradually silted up by natural processes; but a good many of them have no doubt been artificially drained. Their sites are still preserved in such Saxon names as Bog-side, Bogend, Mossflats; and where other human record is gone, the black peaty soil remains to mark where they once lay. It would not be impossible with the help of such pieces of evidence and a study of the present contours of the ground to map out in many districts, now well drained and cultivated, the swamps that hemmed in the progress of our ancestors.

No one looking at the present maps of the north of England and Scotland would be led to suspect what a large number of lakes once dotted the surface of these northern regions. Yet if he turns to old maps, such as those of Timothy Pont, published some three hundred years ago, he will notice many sheets of water represented there which are now much reduced in size or entirely replaced by cultivated fields. If, farther, he scans the topographical names of the different counties, he will be able to detect the sites of other and sometimes still older lakes; while, if he sets to work upon the geological evidence by actual examination of the ground itself, he will be astonished to find how abundant at comparatively recent times were the tarns and lakes of which little or no human record may have survived, and often how much larger were the areas of the lakes that still exist. Owing to some peculiar geological operations that characterised the passage of the Ice Age in the northern hemisphere, the land from which the snow-fields and glaciers retreated was left abundantly dotted over with lakes. The diminution and disappearance of these sheets of water is mainly traceable to the inevitable process of obliteration which sooner or later befalls all lakes great and small. Detritus is swept into them from the surrounding slopes and shores. Every brook that enters

them is engaged in filling them up. The marsh-loving vegetation which grows along their shallow margins likewise aids in diminishing them. Man, too, lends his help in the same task. In early times he built his pile-dwellings in the lakes, and for many generations continued to cast his refuse into their waters. In later days he has taken the more rapid and effectual methods of drainage, and has turned the desiccated bottoms into arable land.

Nor have the changes of the surface been confined to the interior of the country. Standing as it does amid stormy seas and rapid tidal currents, Britain has for ages suffered much from the attacks of the ocean. More especially has the loss of land fallen along our eastern shores. Ever since the submergence of the North Sea and the cutting through of the Strait of Dover, the soft rocks that form our sea-board facing the mainland of Europe have been a prey to the restless waves. Within the last few centuries whole parishes, with their manors, farms, hamlets, villages, and churches have been washed away; and the fisherman now casts his nets and baits his lines where his forefathers ploughed their fields and delved their gardens. And the destruction still goes on. In some places a breadth of as much as five yards is washed away in a single year. Holderness, once a wide and populous district, is losing a strip of ground about two and a quarter yards broad, or in all about thirty-four acres annually. Its coast-line is computed to have receded between two and three miles since the time of the Romans—a notable amount of change, if we would try to picture what were the area and form of the coast-line of eastern Yorkshire at the beginning of the historic period.

But though the general result of the action of the sea along our eastern border has been destructive, it has not been so everywhere. In sheltered bays and creeks some of the material, washed away from more exposed tracts, is cast ashore again. In this

way part of the mud and sand swept from off the cliffs of Holderness is carried southward into the Wash, and is laid down in that wide recess which it is gradually filling up. Along the coasts of Norfolk and Suffolk inlets which in Roman and later times were navigable channels, and which allowed the ships of the Danish Vikings to penetrate far into the interior of the country, are now effaced. On the shores of Kent, also, wide tracts of low land have been gained from the sea. Islands, between which and the shore Roman galleys and Saxon war-boats made their way, are now, like the Isle of Thanet, joined to the mainland. Harbours and towns, like Sandwich, Richborough, Winchelsea, Pevensey, and Porchester, which once stood at the edge of the sea, are now, in some cases, three miles inland. There appears also to have been a curious gain of land on the south coast of Sussex, which has considerably altered the physical geography of that district. The valleys by which these downs are trencched were formerly filled with tidal waters, so that the ancient camps, perched so conspicuously on the crest of the heights, could not communicate directly with each other except by boat. Instead of being a connected chain of fortifications as was once supposed, they must have been independent strongholds, surrounded by water on three sides, and on the north by dense forest and impassable morasses.

But the enumeration of the minor changes of surface might be indefinitely extended. Let me only add, in conclusion, that what I have tried to say generally for the whole country must be worked out for each district. A large amount of information still remains to be gleaned; and though our knowledge of the past must always be fragmentary, it need not continue to be so vague and imperfect as it is now. The field is a wide one, where many workers are needed, and where the active co-operation of the young is especially welcome.

ARCH. GEIKIE.

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